BING

NO 80

Edited by REG BRISTO

JUNE
1986

The International
Crosby Circle

HAVE YOU EVER HAD YOUR MIND TOTALLY BOGGLED - REALLY BOGGLED? HAVE YOU EVER BEEN COMPLETELY FLABBERGASTED ?

No doubt you have - but not as much as now: The BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY has asked us if we have ever been given permission to use Bing Crosby's name, and use his pictures ?

Well, we haven't - but that Society has; and been told to cease forthwith!

At this moment we don't know who has made this astonishing decision - but it doesn't need a Sherlock Holmes, perhaps, to make a cynical guess.

Might just as well have to ask permission to mention Churchill, or Roosevelt, Nelson, Anne Boleyn, or the Marquess of Bute. National institutions, surely.

We await further news - incredulously.

We are painfully, and acutely aware that some of the pages in some of the copies of this issue are bereft of the clarity we aim at - and you expect.

A repeat order for paper appears not to be a 'repeat' as far as quality is concerned. We've had infinite problems. Nevertheless, with care it should all be legible.

BING

Magazine of THE INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE, published quarterly.

No. 80 - June, 1986

Annual Subscription bringing four issues post paid UK £3 European: £4 sterling.

American/Canadian 12 dollars airmail, 8 dollars surface. Australian the equivalent to £5. sterling airmail, £4 surface mail.

We notified US/Canadian members cheques (checks) drawn on their local banks were no longer acceptable due to loss on discounting them here. Happily, the dollar-bill solution is working admirably, and money is actually saved by members who used to remit IMO's. Australian members are invited to follow suit.

TAPE/DISC CONSULTANT: Lionel Pairpoint, 86 Ellesmere Aven., Mill Hill, London N.W.7

FILM CONSULTANTS: Fred Reynolds, 69 Heathmere Avenue, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ

Keith Parkinson, 'Meadowcroft', Houghtons Lane, Eccleston, St. Helens, M'side, WA10 5LD (Keith is also UK representative of the Australian Victoria Bing Crosby society. Details from Keith)

CHIEF PUBLICIST: Leslie Gaylor, 114 Medina Avenue, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 1HG

A "X" in the box opposite indicates your annual subscription is due on receipt of this issue, or shortly thereafter and before the next. With this kept at the lowest possible rate it is essential that remittance is made without awaiting a further reminder. Indeed, one member is most indignant that we do that - says NO ONE should hesitate about renewing!

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It was with concern and consternation that we learned that our ebullient and enthusiastic member RENEE CHESTER had suffered, in the words of her husband "a massive heart attack" barely a fortnight after she had made her departure for Tenerife on 7th March. Renee had been given a fare-well party by Trevor Wagstaff and others and all seemed set so fair for her. Seems Renee was out shopping when the attack struck around noon; removed fairly quickly to the intensive care unit of a clinic, her heart we learn actually stopped two or three times. For eight days she lay in the balance but thanks to the care of the Spanish doctors and nurses, of whom her husband Dennis made heartfelt mention, she appears to be pulling through. But she now has to be fitted with a pace-maker as her heart has been diagnosed as being in poor conditon. It goes without saying, both Renee and Dennis have our prayers and best wishes for as full a recovery as possible. And our good wishes, too, to ENA HOOLEY, undergoing at 80+ a hip replacement. And two days before she entered the clinic, Ena learned her sole relative, such a comfort to her, had passed away.

EDITORIAL

So, authentically, with no bloomers, we reach BING No. 80. It must be a milestone of sorts - 80 divided by four means 20 years of the magazine, regularly every quarter throughout that not inconsiderable period. There have been just two hiccups, the first when your Editor inconsiderably saw fit to fracture a femur in three places on icy steps, and some time earlier, we had a six-week postal strike. Even so, the magazine was merely delayed a few weeks. This by no means represents the start of Crosbyana or Crosby societies in Britain. Indeed, until Alf Farrow, our late lamented friend passed away, we had concrete links with societies of the 30's. But, it can be claimed - by those in a position to know - that BING creates the longest-ever run in its particular format.

Before that, it was the British Bing Crosby Society with its journal. 1966 was, in fact, a time of acrimonious trauma in the Crosby world here when new ideas were put into operation. But all that is long in the past and the Circle is the contented body it most certainly has to be.

But if your Editor has been long-running, it has been a two-sided affair. To wit,, we have so many members who have been with us all the way, demonstrating their loyalty and appreciation not only of Bing but the Circle itself, that it is invidious to mention names.

Only recently a member wrote saying how astonishing it was that, almost ten years after Bing's demise, such an interesting journal could so regularly be produced. Others have suggested (perhaps in fear we would run out of steam!) that we COULD repeat some of the articles published over the years. Well, while we may repeat the same sentiments a few thousand times, that has never been necessary - such is Bing's monumentally unique and fascinating career.

Invidious to mention names? Well, if we made an honourable exception it would have to be in respect of Michael Crampton - of Leeds, of course. In a few months, Michael, starting at the age of 14, will make his 29th annual subscription to organised Crosbyana! He has remained unwavering in his enthusiasm over all those years and in the process become a true authority on the great man, possessing an encyclopaedic knowledge of all aspects of Bing's career. It was no passing fancy at 14 years!

And - for 20 years he has organised the annual, now traditional, meeting of Crosby admirers, kindred souls!

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THE REMBRANDT EVENT

Around eighty people duly turned up at the Rembrandt Hotel in south-west London for the social event organised by John Marshall. Its a little odd but this figure seems to be par for the course, one might say, as around that figure invariably turns up for the annual event at Leeds in the autumn. A little surprising possibly that more do not venture to an event held in London, for the 'catchment' area would seem to be that much larger. In other words, we've always believed that a rendezvous in the capital would be more convenient for a lot more people. But it doesn't seem that way.

Not that 80 is an insignifcant number by any means; and we're well aware that the vast majority of members are content to play their records, watch their videos, read BING - and that is their Crosbyana. They have no wish to participate in get-togethers. And, why not? Everyone gets out of Crosbyana what they want. We pursue the subject no further, except to say that no doubt economic considerations almost certainly intrude, especially these days.

As was demonstrated last year, the Rembrandt is a highly attractive, well-appointed venue. The spirit was, as ever, good and the entertainment varied.

Among those worthy of mention are Ena Hooley, our oldest member, who made the journey from Salisbury; Barry Whittingham - awaiting yet another operation - with his mother, Charlotte motored down from Nottingham

We understand that David Jacobs mentioned the event on the BBC and that brought a few strangers who seemed to be under the impression they were attending a record fair! Which is another idea.

Your Editor/Secretary was greatly disappointed that a bout of flu which more closely resembled bronchitis prevented him undertaking what is, in the best of circumstances, a long and arduous journey. It was particularly unfortunate that there were a number attending he wanted to meet for the first time.

There were tapes to be listened to - the one from Kathryn Crosby being an especial highlight. Wishing the event every success, the lady touched on the furore that she had caused by withdrawing Bing's name from the golf tournament but said a new one was being organised. She also mentioned she is busily at work on volume two of her life with Bing.

David Jacobs had indicated a wish to be present but was, for domestic reasons, unable to do so. Nevertheless, he took the trouble to personally drop a taped message at the Rembrandt on the morning of the 26th. A very cordial, unassuming, messge of goodwill.

John's trump card, it might be claimed, was the presence of his new-found

friend at MCA, IAN McLAY, who submitted himself to the assembled Crosbyites to questioning. It was interesting to hear Ian confirm that they (the record companies) had driven a whole generation out of record shops because of 'pop' music. Ian told of the ways being used to project the new album, BING CROSBY - IN DEMAND. The new album, unfortunately not available at the meeting, was of course a big talking-point. Asked if there was co-operation between the MCA's in various companies he answered there was, to an extent. Another of his interesting points - in answer to a question - was that Japan was hungry for all forms of Western culture, which accounted for them issuing Crosby albums among many other artists. Rather oddly, Ian claimed that the people who wanted these Japanese issues could get them, albeit expensively, and there was, he seemed to think, no need to issue them here. He was, however, a most friendly soul attempting to do a difficult public relations job!

Bing's recordings were, of course, well in evidence; later there was 'live' music (as th y say these days) and we did get a complaint that it suffered from the modern curse - over-amplifiation. Eric Vincent, who so charmed everyone last year again sang in good voice, while Michael Collins from north London with his friend, Michael Flunge, also entertained the company in fine style.

Yet one must record that it was John Marshall's day. In fact - a field-day for JCM! Perhaps that makes him a Field-Marshall. Apart from the heavy work of organising the event, his negotiations with David Jacobs, Ian McLay - Kathryn and others, he MC'd the proceedings. Not satisfied, apparently, he played his Yamaha keyboard for the singing - and even accompanied Eric Vincent on an impromptu rendering of SONG OF THE ISLANDS! We're not finished - he also achieved another ambition, he told us, by singing in public for the first time. He gave 'em I'M CONFESSIN'! A field day indeed.

Although the new album wasn't ready at the time, Mr. McLay had brought a score of the excellent sleeves and these were "sold off" at £1 a time to swell John's IN MEMORIAM 'VARIETY' fund. Two 'trial' pressings of the album were auctioned at brought the astonishing price of £70 from JACK McCARRON and PETER GREEN! A raffle added another £58 and Frank Murphy on behalf of his PHOTOCLUB donated £100 from a project in which he is participating - "MEMORIES ARE MADE OF THIS".

One compassionate sidelight: BRIAN FORD, disabled and not in the best of health, managed to attend and was particularly impressed, he tells us, by young RICHARD BARKER who came with his father, DENNIS, from Gloucestershire. He was most attentive and considerate. As he is only 13 I must confess, says Brian, I've never come across such a caring young boy before.

So many members wrote about the event and ended up by saying, in modest fashion, "...but better writers than I will be reporting the meeting..." This report therefore has been culled from various sources and we trust it doesn't read too much that way!

AND LESLIE GAYLOR WAS THERE! After some doubt he eventually made HIS arduous way from the Isle of Wight. He addressed the meeting in his usual style, had a long conference with Ian McLay - and as you can see from what follows, the Rembrandt had him waxing almost lyrically!

LESLIE GAYLOR

On April 26 last I was one of those in attendance at the Rembrandt Hotel in London for an event once again organised by the ever-industrious John Marshall. And most congenial I found it to meet some familiar faces as well as some new ones, to shake hands with fellow-Crosbyites and share the happy atmosphere that goes hand in hand with these affairs - and a special word to those who entertained us with a song.

I learned with regret, however, that our Editor and Secretary could not be present on account of indisposition. This was a disappointment to me and I know to so many present. We enjoy a word from Reg, usually worth hearing! We all missed his company.

John held the whole thing together, took the reins, as it were, introducing his contact from MCA Records, Mr. Iain McLay, who addressed us all and answered questions on the subject of his trade. Both John and Iain are to be complimented for their joint association which has resulted in the issue of the twenty-track album IN DEMAND. May I suggest we can all play a part in our various ways of helping to promote this album and make it a success from the sales angle.

Requests for the songs on it to be played on local radio stations is, of course, the simplest way to help promotion; and suggestions to any local newspaper critics to mention it in their column is another avenue. So many of us need numerous Bing recordings in micro-groove but we are well aware that the companies are in business to make money in order to survive. And good sales should automatically mean encouragment to make more such issues.

Through the good offices of these two, Iain and John, I was presented with a test-pressing of the record and this filled me with a sense of pride. I was quite delighted at the kind gesture.

On the way home to the Isle of Wight from London by train in the early hours of Sunday, I found myself admiring the whole record package with its fine blue-and-gold presentation and much concerned with how it will fare market-wise.

Within minutes of arriving home I had the record on the turntable to find myself playing the song I have waited years for to have in long-play form, namely GETTING TO KNOW YOU. This track alone makes the whole album worthwhile; I shall certainly be using my usual means to get it well aired! I had a long chat with Iain McLay and assured him he could count on me to do everything possible in the promotion of this record.

(This album is, of course, fully dealt with in TRACK EVENTS - Editor)

When I arrived back on the Isle of Wight soon after dawn had broken I was quite unable to get a lift home by car and had to begin the long trek home through lovely little country roads and lanes, totally on my own. "Islanders" are not around on Sunday mornings until about 10 or 11 am. With a copy of IN DEMAND in

my hand and birds galore giving out with their 'dawn chorus' I felt that life was treating me pretty fine. I'm sure I cameaway from the Rembrandt as happy as anyone.

Having said how nice it was to meet so many again I should like to make mention of seeing again, with pleas ure, the 'ace' Bing-booster Frank Murphy. Frank has helped to keep Bing's flag flying over many years now.

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As always, and like so many others, the arrival of the last issue of BING had me engrossed in its contents, immediately I might add, then such is my format, I find myself reading it, or parts of it, over and over again. So, thanks to everyone who contributed to the magazine to make it such enjoyable reading for me - and others of course - with a special word for Editor Reg's studied lay-out which makes everything easy to follow.

I would like to make a point or two as mentioned in that issue about the fine coverage of Bing's record ings as far as British listeners are concerned on BBC radio - and nationwide at that.

This is most gratifying because of the wonderfully sophisticated broadcasting equipment radio stations are using today. As my old friend, Stan White of Kettering remarked to me recently, it has long been my view also: those concerned with broadcasting are mainly concerned these days with SOUNDS - everything must sound good - and quality of performance can often take second place.

As the bulk of Bing's recorded work was done with supposedly 'lesser' equipment the chances of older recordings getting a regular "airing" as I see it are somewhat diminished. This means that such older recordings have to be slotted into programmes where they can best be entertaining - specialist programmes like that of Alan Dell's superb SOUNDS EASY and a few other similar programmes.

I must point out here, too, that I am not one of those under the impression that everything in stereo is Heaven-sent. How can a single voice be in stereo, anyway? Perhaps the accompaniment - and that can be distracting! I love the nice forward sound of Bing's voice on the older recordings, 78s, of course. I recall that on Sept. 14, 1977 (I can be precise because it was at the last recording session for the SEASONS album) Bing asked to hear a playback of SEPTEMBER SONG which he had recorded on the earlier Monday session of Sept. 12. His reason for this was because he was deciding what songs to use at the London Palladium concerts and had SEPTEMBER SONG in mind. The tape played the sound through a 12-speaker system looking down at us from an angle. They were about 9 ft. high and there was considerable volume. "Too many dynamics out here," said Bing. "I'm going in here so that I can listen as though to a 78!" What he meant by 'here' was a small box-like affair used for separating singers from the orchestra while recording. This had a smaller speaker, about 5 ins. in diameter. I gathered from this that Bing much preferred the older 78-style techniques of recording

On the question of 'takes' also in the last issue I like to hear the alternate takes, especially of those 1932-34 recordings. And as MCA say they do hold all the takes still I hope we may hear some some day. I would certainly like to hear an alternative to the one issued of LET'S TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME. On the issued version Bing's voice is recorded far in the background at the start. I'm sure there must be a better 'alternate' take. Versions on radio are invariably much better-balanced. And as an example of what I mean about Bing's voice 'forward', the soundtrack of HERE COMES THE WAVES holds me spellbound.

I share the view of many that Bing's records would have been even better than they are had he been recorded by the Columbia or Capitol engineers. Decca were notoriously deficient in

techniques in their early days..

There was also comment in the last issue whereby a member stated he couldn't understand how others can prefer Bing's radio material to the commercial recordings.

Dare I say that basically I'm a Bing radio man! I like the commercial recordings well enough, naturally, but for personal preference the song content of radio offers better and more melodious songs in my opinion, even though the commercial catalogue itself offered a wide variety. There are many instances of radio versions being of really good and better quality than commercial recordings. At least, I think so. I feel that so often the fact that radio material is of indifferent sound quality comes into; but if one bears in mind the age of some great radio material, and the endless dubbing that has necessarily gone on, AND can make the necessary allowance for this, the voice was magnificent. As the Editor commented, Bing couldn't afford to let his radio singing deteriorate!

The member mentioned in particular the album BING IN THE 30's VOL 1 (JSP) made up mostly tho' not entirely of Kraft Music Hall Radio songs. He was not happy with the quality, I gathered. I too think it could have been better recorded as the bass response has almost been 'cut off', taking some of the depth of Bing's voice and the quality of the orchestra. But for historical content is well worth having! How many, for instance, possessed hitherto the Paramount publicity disc of PLEASE and HERE LIES LOVE? Surely these two items alone made the album a must.

The Vol 2, our friend may be interested to know, has some of the bass restored thus improving the quality.

(Editor: Its only fair to say that the producers have told us that they are faced with something of a dilemma with this KMH material and the publicity disc mentioned - some of the sources are so old - of course they are, 50 years and more! - that often curing one defect brings in another and a choice has to made. These things should be understood when listening to such historic material).

Finally, I have had a letter from my old friend, KEN BARNES, which invites the co-operation of all members, worldwide! I feel I did once explain in a previous issue that the Philips company moved locations and this of course involved shifting their many thousands of tapes; these include the 24 CBS radio tracks featuring Bing-Buddy Cole which were updated by Ken Barnes/Pete Moore with new stereo orchestral arrangements as was done with the SONGS OF A LIFETIME double album, but which have never been released. So many enquire about these, and now they have the chance to assist.

It seems no one knows precisely where these tapes are now as a result of the location-move. Even Ken Barnes says this is a most sorry state of affairs when the British record industry is in such a sad financial state. So vast is the tape library, says Ken, that it could take YEARS for these Crosby tapes to come to light - unless a determined effort is prompted to find them.

Ken suggests that as many letters as possible may get things moving; so basically we think it an excellent idea to write requesting these 24 unissued Bing/Cole/Moore tracks be issued.

Furthermore, Ken has ideas to also reissue the 48 tracks that came out on the SONGS OF A LIFETIME and COME RAIN OR COME SHINE albums in an entire set as a series of digitally mastered albums and in newly-programmed packages with better covers and more imaginative artwork.

Those willing to push can write to Ken as he suggests at his home:

CRESTHAVEN,
31 CLARENCE RD., NORTH,
BENFLEET,
ESSEX SS7 1HT

He would then dump all letters on the desk of the managing director of the Philips company personally.

Alternatively, says Ken, members may write direct to:

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR
PHILIPS RECORDS,
50 NEW BOND ST.,
LONDON, W.1.

It is my personal knowledge that fans of other entertainers through their organisations are very active on behalf of their idols. This is one reason why there is a good catalogue of their respective 'stars' recordings around. So, my appeal to you all is to let us show that on the occasion we can match and exceed their efforts.

Those members who purchased that splendid album, THE RADIO YEARS, Vol 1 (NCP 704) issued by Precision Records & Tapes, may like to note that THE RADIO YEARS VOLUME 2 will be available from May 20.

Good luck and best wishes to all.

Editor: A comprehensive Leslie this time - a d that's going to please everyone.

We hope everyone will write to either of the above addresses requesting the issue of the - so far - unissued tracks mentioned.

Far be it, however, for us to pour cold water on any proposed Crosby items but we do seriously wonder what the appeal will be for a reissue of the SONGS OF A LIFETIME/ COME RAIN OR COME SHINE albums as a set in digital remastering. Seems to us it would need an entirely new market to the one we provide for, all our members surely have the issues already made in excellent quality?

As we've already commented, duplication is certainly the bane of most collectors - and that refers to two or three tracks on a new album. But a whole 48 tracks which we purchased just a few years back? I would need a lot of convincing of its commercial viability. Be interesting to know what members feel about this.
(SEE TRACK EVENTS FOR ANOTHER RADIO MATERIAL ALBUM: REPLAY.

LEEDS EVENT THIS YEAR IS ON SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 28th

I AM GOING TO THE USA IN early September for a month and I was wondering if you or any of your members could give me any information regarding a visit to places of interest concerning Bing?

I will be going to Los Angeles and then staying at a place called IDLEWYLDE, approx. 150 miles from LA. From what I gather you disembark at Los Angeles and go through a town called H'MEL. I would much appreciate if anyone can help me out.

JACK LARMAN,
9 Quinces Croft,
Gadebridge,
H'MEL HEMPSTEAD,
HERTS HP1 3JT

Editor: I feel certain that members who have made such a pilgrimage will be very happy to get in touch with Jack direct.

TOO-RAL-LOO-RAL-LOO-RAL was listed in the NEVER ON LP feature a couple of issues back; and as this song is among the MOST-reissued of Bing's records, it caused some consternation. There is a story behind its inclusion. The relevant point is the date of 1944 in the NEVER ON LP listing

This recording, or the matrix of it, developed a fault with the result that it was issued only on 78rpm discs. All LP issues contain the entirely new recording - not a different 'take' - which Bing made on July 17, 1945.

Thus, the 1944 recording can NEVER appear on LP. Its a small point but clears up the mystery occasioned by the song's inclusion.

FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS BING CROSBY was a fruitful source of interviews. There are scores of scrap-books to illustrate the point. So many of them were contemporary 'fan' articles, only mildly interesting at the time. Every so often, however, one finds some with validity, throwing real light on the man. We are fortunate in having no less than three such stories for this issue, two occasioned by the death of two of his fellow-artists. They follow:

BING CROSBY - CAREFREE CROONER

BY MARSHA HUNT :

BING CROSBY was a constant in all our lives; a comfy, lighthearted presence, steering a steady unruffled, course through nearly five decades of shifting cultural fads. He was a cherished staple.

It was his talent I loved. I knew him only slightly, but closely followed and appreciated his career, and when the news came that his life had ended, my sense of loss, like millions of others I suppose, was as sharp as for a family member.

There had been an earlier scare in January, 1974, when he was hospitalised in Northern California, obeying an impulse I wrote to him (and received a charming, grateful reply).

Re-reading the carbon copy of my letter today, it seems appropriate to share it now as merely one of uncounted recollections.

****

January 13, 1974

Dear Bing,

Possibly, no one has ever explained to you that 'living legends' are not allowed to get sick. But since you are now, and are clearly in violation, you will please oblige all of us whose legend you are, and shape up.

All the same, your indisposition has provided me with the excuse to indulge in something I've long wanted to do: Thank you for the large role you have played in my life.

It began for me, I guess, during the summer of 1931, when I was attending a girls' summer camp in the pine woods of Maine. Boy-less until Fall, we dreamed our dreams to the current love songs that poured forth from our portable phonographs. And it was your voice, singing your songs, that gave wings to my dreams.

The next four years, while I was growing up and finishing school in New York, your singing became part of the fabric of my life.

We were a musical family, and during summers in Connnecticut, my sister, young uncle, and I

formed a vocal trio, performing Friday evenings over WICC, a Bridgeport radio station. As trio song-scout, I'd hover over our radio, memorising tunes and scribbling down lyrics for us to perform. Your songs: OLD OX ROAD, JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, IT MUST BE TRUE, MY SILENT LOVE, I SURRENDER, DEAR, LAZYBONES.

To this day, I haven't forgotten a single lyric.

And suddenly, I was seventeen. It was the summer of 1935 and there I was, under contract to Paramount - your studio! Sometimes I would haunt your set, discreetly, to watch you work. I saw a parade of pretty girls play opposite you, but alas, we never did work together. I was in one musical there, but it was one of the few Paramount made without you.

Once I cam close - RHYTHM ON THE RIVER (1936) - Frances Farmer beat me out in a close finish. Still, we did meet a few times, and you would greet me when we passed on the lot. Once I sang a charming cowboy lullahy for you, which a cowhand had written, and asked me to show you. You were most kind about it, and even about my singing.

I heard nearly every KRAFT MUSIC HALL you ever did, delighting in the style of speaking you developed. It was a self-kidding form of articulation, which made use of wider vocabulary than one usually heard in show business. You were thoroughly clever and sneaky about it. There was always an implied 'Get me, would you!' as you unfurled some polysyllabic gambit. But all the while you were bringing a welcome tone of savoir-faire to your entertainment, and treating the public as if they might just be intelligent, too.

As to your much-touted and still imitated casualness - hard won, I happen to know - it always carried validity, from the ROAD romps through GOING MY WAY (1944) and THE COUNTRY GIRL (1954).

You made us cry just as hard as Garbo did. And no-one made us laugh more delightedly. Whatever you did, you accomplished it with your own particular style and grace. Even now, your occasional forays into television remind us what true professionalism really is. I guess it could all be summed up as 'Class'.

But in my eyes, you were never classier than when, in 1960, I wrote asking you to take part in a documentary film I was making to salute the United Nations World Refugee year.

It was my own project. I had no financing, production company, title, secretary, or even letterhead. So I wrote you merely about the need, and the film that I hoped would bring some public awareness and response

to it.

The next thing I knew it was you on the phone saying simply: 'Sounds pretty good - dark blue suit alright?' Not a query about auspices, or when and where the film would be shown. What other stars would be appearing? - none of that. It was hard not to sniffle my gratitude over the phone, and not to hug you on sight when you came to do your spot. Perhaps I never told you that program became the chief public information and fund-raising device on behalf of refugees, and played on more than 50 channels throughout America, and yours was my favourite spot, by far the most moving.

For all the above, I thank you. And since starting this, news is that you're resting comfortably, and due for a short rest-up before being as fit as ever. That's the best news of 1974 and I'm glad to have unburdened this, while you're still a captive audience in hospital.

Health and long life, dear Bing.

MARSHA HUNT PR"S"NELL.

What a truly delightful, indeed discerning, letter from Marsha Hunt to Bing who, as you may remember, or will learn from the above, was a film actress with the Paramount Studios. It was, of course, written at the time of Bing's lung operation when there was worldwide concern over Bing - for a lung operation always sounds ominous.

It appeared in a magazine entitled CLOS"-UPS - MOVIE STARS, which we gratefully acknowledge. And we're especially obliged to G"OFF. CHAPPELLS of Leek, in Staffordshire, for bringing it to our attention. Indeed, he went to a lot of trouble to provide us with a copy.

The lady obviously followed Bing's career closely and she was a true admirer, often from a special and privileged angle. She said the things so charmingly that most of us felt at that time. And note Bing's sincere, if laconic and ready agreement to participate in the refugee appeal. So characteristic.

When TED ROGERS became the 'victim' of ITV's THIS IS YOUR LIF" it was inevitable that Bing would come into the story, bearing in mind his close association with Bing as comedian of Bing's shows here and in America. There were kind words to from Rosie Clooney and a small contribution from Harry.

We mentioned the laughs we often get, unexpectedly, from members' letters: Here are some more: "Make sure you don't miss the summer - the rain will pass one afternoon and then - summer. Be on the look-out!" REG SMITH (Northants).

Then TOM BEWS (Edinburgh): "..sorry to be late but I've been out of town dodging my creditors and visiting relatives - vastly overstaying my welcome. Hope you are fit, as I am - fit to drop when my two grandchildren have visited....."

They brighten up dismal mornings.....

A SUNDAY NIGHT AT THE GROVE

From WIDE-EYED IN BABYLON: An autobiography
by RAY MILLAND
Published by Bodley Head, London, to whom
grateful acknowledgements.

It was 7:30pm and I was just thinking about dinner, when the phone rang. It was Asher, the MGM publicity man, calling to see if there was anything I needed. I asked if he had any suggestions about a place to eat that might be interesting. His reply was that I was sitting right on top of the most interesting spot in town that night. Sunday Night at the Grove happened once a month, and the place would be lousy with celebrities all fighting for a chance to get up and do a little entertaining.

I thought for a minute and then said, "Look here, why don't you join me, I'll call down and get a table for two and you can sort of clue me in?"

"Not a bad idea," Asher said. "But don't you call for a table because you'll never get it. I'll call. I know the maitre d'. I'll be there in twenty minutes."

He was as good as his word and we found ourselves seated at a minute table at the top of the stairs on a balcony facing the orchestra. I've been told the room has been completely remodeled within the last few years. I've not been there recently, so for the all-hair and no-bra brigade I would like to describe it as I first saw it. For a room devoted to good food and good music, it was huge. I imagine it seated about four hundred. In the centre was a large dance floor, with the bandstand on the left as one entered. Scattered among the tables were tall coco palms with monkeys hanging from them in all sorts of attitudes, some of them with lighted eyes that blinked. The rear wall was a huge panorama of a tropical island with an impossible silver moon suspended there. The tables were individually lighted, and the waiters dressed in tuxedos, the orchestra was Gus Arnheim's, whose vocal group was the three Rhythm Boys - Bing Crosby, Harry Barris and Al Rinker. It was quite a room. On this night it was packed, and on the floor level black tie was de rigueur.

I won't attempt to describe the whole evening, because I didn't know most of the performers and a lot of it was dreary. But there were three high spots for me, the first being when Grace Moore sang MIMI, standing at her table to the accompani-

ment of the orchestra's xylophonist. Incredibly beautiful. Another was when W.C.Fields was tenderly escorted up onto the stage and demanded three cigar boxes, which he proceeded to juggle brilliantly, except that the middle one would occasionally drop to the floor. He would pick it up with the other two and go on with increasing rage, until he reduced them all to matchwood. Then he threw the debris into the piano and stalked off, demanding to see the madame of this house of joy. Quite hilarious.

The third and most moving happening of the night was the final one. I thought it was an odd choice until I remembered this was Sunday. One of the Rhythm Boys, the blond and lackadaisical one named Bing Crosby, stepped to the microphone and in a surprisingly fine baritone started Gounod's AVA MARIA. Immediately there was a hush; not even a plate moved. It is not a long piece and is usually reprised. When he came to the reprise I heard a soprano softly drift in from a table near the stage. Towards the end both voices came in full, and when they finished the hush remained. I looked at Asher, but he didn't know I was there. He was rapt, transported. Then the roar started, chairs were pushed back and people stood and the applause was deafening. It was so emotional, and to me, strangely reassuring. As we were saying good night I asked Asher if he knew who the soprano was. He looked at me with his veneer back in place and said: "Coco the bird girl!" I found out later it was Lily Pons.

(LILY PONS was a very celebrated opera singer of the time - Ed)

WHAT A WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE is described here; and there were many other such occasions when Bing, apparently, brought the clientele at the famed Cocoanut Grove to its feet with unscheduled items, apart from his remarkable singing with Gus Arnheim's band. And remember, the audience at the Grove was no ordinary one; it was a discerning assortment of the cream of Hollywood actors and actresses, all highly talented. The Grove was a happy place for Bing, probably one of the happiest periods of his career.

One imagines that few people in the film colony, perhaps in California generally, were unduly surprised when, shortly after the Grove sojourn, Bing made his meteoric rise to world stardom.

This story has been reproduced because the writer, RAY MILLAND, is one of the two great film stars that have passed away in the past quarter.

The other, of course, is the legendary JAMES CAGNEY. When one thinks of the glibness with which today's MC's and dee-jays dub tenth-rate performers as "legends in their own lifetime", or as super-stars and mega-stars (what preposterous rubbish?) one must use the terms sparingly. But certainly Cagney was legendary, is legendary, and must be, alongside Bing, one of the mightiest and highest-talented performers of the century. We had the privilege of seeing Jimmy Cagney interviewed by Parkinson on TV just a few years back when he was then an aged man - together with his life-long friend, PAT O'BRIEN, who was also a great friend of Bing's, as you read in the Del Mar story last issue.

James Cagney was revealed as a highly intelligent, philosophical character

whose views on any subject were certainly worth listening to - and heeding.

> Nothing was more surprising about James Cagney than his versatility. Virtually all through the 30's he was the archetypal gangster - pugnacious, perky, threatening to both men and women alike! Such films were extremely 'fashionable' then, if one may use the term, and Cagney led the way with such able contemporaries as Humphrey Bogart, George Raft, Edward G. Robinson, Paul Muni and others. Prohibition, which bred the gangster era, had not long been reversed and was very fresh in the mind of Americans.

Here we should interpolate a note or two for we have to bear in mind that a lot of our current members are much younger and do not recall, or perhaps even know of such things. PROHIBITION was the banning of all alcohol in the States, of course, and as was soon proved, such drinking cannot be outlawed. Illegal drinking and even more important, illegal brewing and distilling rapidly took over. And the markets for this illicit booze led to the gang-barons and the era of unprecedented lawlessness which reigned in AMERICA. We haven't the space to enlarge further, but the name Al Capone and events like the St. Valentine's Day massacre will probably be known to most. And as we've indicated, it became a fruitful source of inspiration for violent 'gangster' films.

> Then almost out of the blue, James Cagney was revealed as a No. 1. song-and-dance man in YANKEE DOODLE DANDY! And as the years rolled by a appeared in all kinds of character roles - always with brilliance.

JAMES CAGNEY'S little cameo on Bing Crosby, contained in his auto-biography, is of particular interest and we are delighted to reproduce it on the next page. Read in conjunction with the one above fascinating sidelights by contemporary stars illustrate what his peers felt about Bing Crosby.

RAY MILLAND - British, of course, in fact, Welsh - did not attain the eminence, perhaps, of Cagney. Nevertheless, he had a distinguished career for more than 50 years - his Oscar-winning role in

> THE LOST WEEKEND will be best remembered - the fearful story of an alcoholic - but he starred in scores of films.

Its rather strange that his name is never coupled with, or mentioned in the same breath, as that of RICHAR BURTON. True Burton came from a later era yet his much shorter career ran parallel with Milland's. But they were born in roughly the same place in Llanelly in South Wales. Ray Milland adapted his name from the steel mills in Llanelly for his real name was Reginald Truscott-Jones. And it may be interesting to note that he was quite well-known where your Editor now lives. Indeed, my wife was working in the hotel in Pontypool at which he stayed on a return home visit to Wales in 1939. Such was his bearing and extro-vert style he was known in those days as The Rajah! Like so many other fine actors of the era, he can still be seen in movies on TV. The longevity of some actors is really astonishing - just imagine Cesar Romero, Barbara Stanwyck are among many who were appearing as stars in films in the early 30's. And Ray Milland was certainly in that category - another facet of his fine career (his book is a racy enterfaining one) is that as a very young man in he was the Household Cavalry! Romero and Barbara Stanwyck can, of course, be seen weekly in American 'soap' operas.

Another group occupying my attention in 1942 was the Actors' Committee of the National Victory Committee. As chairman of that unit I can attest we did a lot of night work. I remember Porter Hall saying that our epitaph should read, "Committeed to death." But it was little enough we were doing for the war effort, and as was only fitting, a number of us were called together to go out on the road to plug the sale of war bonds. This was the Victory Caravan, which went cross-country for three weeks. We had quite a group. There were Cary Grant, Pat O'Brien, Frank McHugh, Laurel and Hardy, Bert Lahr, Groucho Marx, Charles Boyer, and others, plus the most beautiful assembly of gals anybody ever cast an eye upon. Among them were Claudette Colbert, Joan Bennett, Joan Blondell, Arlene Whelan, Olivia de Havilland—such beauties. Bob Hope was our emcee until Chicago, where Bing Crosby took over.

I had never worked with Bing before, and here was a great opportunity to see at first-hand the way this great performer did it. Bing had always been a remarkable fella to me, and I had always thought that everything he did was so relaxed and effortless. Not so. At our opening show at Soldier Field, Chicago, there was a crowd of 130,000, with 30,000 of them behind the platform we were working. Bob Hope was doing his stuff and he said, "Well, I know you're waiting to hear the Groaner—," and the place went crazy. Bing walked out to a reception for which the adjective "triumphant" is inadequate.

He stood there in that very humble, charming way of his, wearing a brass-buttoned blue coat, rust trousers, brown-and-white shoes, and a light green shirt that seemed to verify the legend that he's color blind. After the audience explosion died down, Bing said, "Whadda yez wanna hear?" and they exploded again until the stadium walls nearly buckled. After they subsided, he said, "Ya wanna leave it to me?" and they blew up again. Finally, he said, "Hit me, Al," and our orchestra conductor, Al Newman, started his boys off on "Blues in the Night." They had played only the first two bars when the audience went into rapturous applause once more. Bing finished that song, and never in my life have I heard anything like it. I got the traditional goose pimples just standing there, listening. He did another, same thing.

And if ever I wanted a demonstration of how it felt to live through that old vaudeville phrase, "What an act to follow!," this was it. I was next on the bill, waiting in the wings to do my little stint, "Yankee Doodle Dandy." Fortunately I had some good natural support in the form of my Civil War soldier's uniform, eight cute girls, plus eight American flags blowing in the wind. I danced my brains out, the girls waved the flags energetically, and the entire cast came out and joined in "The Star-Spangled Banner," and this was, I can tell you, an experience.

But I've almost forgotten the point of this story, which is that when Bing came offstage, the perspiration on him was an absolute revelation to me. Here he had been to all appearances perfectly loose and relaxed, but not at all. He was giving everything he had in every note he sang, and the apparent effortlessness was a part of his very hard work. I can remember the first time I had unfixed opinions about Bing. Up at the Vineyard in 1938 I heard one of his radio shows, and I knew at once that this was a most extraordinary fella. I actually started to write a piece about him, "The Miracle Known as Crosby," but after a page or two, I stopped. I realized he was just beginning, and would add to to even more than he was. So I dropped it, thinking perhaps I'd save up my thoughts for the proper time. If this is the time, I'm glad at least to report my feelings about a man I always watch when he's available to public view.

PARADE is a Sunday newspaper magazine in America which carries a degree of integrity. One of its features is WALTER SCOTT'S PERSONALITY PARADE which answers questions about leading personalities. On April 27 last it included this:

QUESTION: I was shocked to learn that the late Bing Crosby was a cowardly monster who beat his boys until their blood ran. His eldest son, Gary, later suffered from alcoholism. How did Bing Crosby manage to deceive his adoring public and hide his shameful crime? Didn't the boys' teachers or the Crosby family doctor become suspicious?

----Margaret L. Kempf, Greenbelt Md.

ANSWER: Bing Crosby, who died in 1977, may not have been a particularly good father to his four sons by Dixie Lee Crosby, but he certainly was no "cowardly monster". He believed that sparing the rod would spoil the child. He had a particularly difficult time rearing his first son, Gary, but sent him to the best private schools, including Stanford University, provided him with many professional opportunities and established a handsome trust fund for him as well as for his other offspring. Bing Crosby was a cool, reserved man whose image as a bright, friendly, cheerful singer-actor was projected and protected by the Paramount Pictures publicity department. He was not a sadistic child-abuser, however, and should not be held responsible for Gary's capitulation to alcoholism. Crosby was a much better father to his second set of children - Mary, Harry and Nathaniel - by his second wife, the actress Kathryn Grant.

Our good friend and regular correspondent, MR. JUSTICE FRANCIS SMITH of New York sent us the article with the comment:

> Bing was very much in the news here on Sunday, April 27. The article on Bing brought joy and happiness to the hearts of all who read it. The fact that it came from such an objective source made it more important than if it appeared in one of our newsletters.

It was certainly an effective rebuttal of the malevolence of Gary and the other mean-spirited character-assassins who attempted to do their vicious work on Bing. The emphasis on Bing's countless professional opportunities to Gary (and the others) plus it being Gary's own inclination to alcohol is particularly pertinent.

GATESHEAD REVISITED

reported by PHIL MORGAN (Newcastle)

The 1986 social season in the North-east opened with a TRIBUTE TO BING evening held at the Washington Suite of the Five Bridges Hotel, Gateshead on Friday 9th May. Around 50 people were warmly welcomed by the organiser, JOHN JOYCE. A notable feature this time was the number of visitors who had travelled fair distances from all parts of the country - Len and Jean Hunter, from Bedford, Bill Huntington and John Weir from Morecambe, Percy and Ann Keepin from Maidstone and Matt Sprott from Lanarkshire in Scotland. Old friends from afar included Michael Crampton from Leeds, Paula Sangster from Potters Bar and Gwen Harvey from Farnborough.

Before the meal we had a quiz, which I had set myself and I must admit that I did not expect the winner to be 100 per cent successful! I set the middle section of eleven songs associated with Bing - and Bill Huntington identified all of them with, apparently, no trouble at all.

For the meal, we deserted what had almost become traditional with us - steak and kidney pie - and went for roast chicken, roast potatoes, etc. Dutch apple pie and coffee followed. An excellent meal, thoroughly enjoyed.

> After the usual animated conversation, plenty of Bing records - in fact, the usual background, a film was presented - THE ONE AND ONLY BING, narrated by Joseph Cotton. This was exceptionally well-received for it was the first viewing for many, including yours truly.

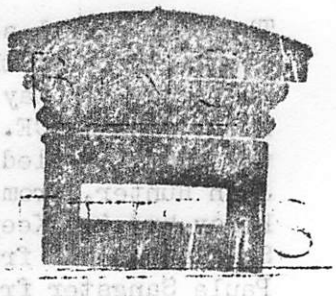
We were again delighted to welcome our good friend, PETER HETHERINGTON, presenter of the MEMORIES programme on Metro Radio. Peter was particularly welcome on this occasion as recently he has been completely out of action on account of a pinched nerve in his spine which rendered him completely immobile. Peter in a short address told us that his programme, MEMORIES OF BING, broadcast on Christmas Day via Metro Radio, had since gone out on 20 commercial radio stations.

A second quiz proved most entertaining. Set by Bob Jones, it was based on songs sung by Bing but which are more often associated with other artists. This was won by MARY RIDLEY from Newcastle.

The evening ended around midnight and all departed feeling we had enjoyed one of the best-ever Bing events. JOHN JOYCE is, of course, the mainspring behind these North-East social events and thanks are certainly due to him for his splendid work in organising such truly sociable. get-togethers - in the name of Bing.

"LEEDS" IS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28th THIS YEAR ! (For the forward-planners)

DEREK PARKES, informs us that all orders for BING IN THE 30'S VOL 2 have now been met, as have those for the MILLS BROTHERS VOL 1. Volume 2 of the latter (Mills) should be ready by the time you read this and will be sent without delay to those who have ordered - they will also be reserved for those who have shewn interest. Derek, on behalf of JSP records, is very pleased with the sales of all the JSP to date. Further news later on in this issue. Derek's address: 66 Firs Rd., Winterslow, Salisbury, SP5 1SW



BING Letters

It was gratifying that the March issue of BING produced voluminous mail - always healthy but on this occasion quite heavy. A number of subjects appeared to spark this off and much can be summed up: For example, no computer or detailed analysis is required to arrive at the concrete conclusion that the average Crosby admirer - collector if you like - is fairly indifferent to varying 'takes', particularly when the difference is minute. They view different performances with more favour, however, Most feel that two or more versions of the same song on radio material albums is a complete waste of playing space!

Less conclusive is members' reaction to records as opposed to radio versions. If anything, however, most seem to prefer studio-recorded discs - but most add that the often indifferent quality of radio performances (thro' age of course, and endless 'dubbing') sways their opinion. However, as you have read, Leslie Gaylor is one of those who goes for the radio Bing!

None of the above should be taken as indicating that we are indifferent to those who DO relish different 'takes'; nor do we take sides in the disc/radio question. Everyone to their taste! To letters, and the first are preoccupied with SONGS - not unnaturally!

CHAS. MARTIN, 18 Wootton Green Lane, Halsall Common, Nr. Coventry:

I am always fascinated by Bing singing FOR LOVE ALONE (I Have so little to give), recorded in August 1936, with Victor Young and his Orchestra. Was this an original Bing song? I have heard it sung so many times at my old Dad's ex-servicemens' club on Sunday evening concerts. Did they take it from Bing, or did he just record a well-known song - similar to the way he took in GYPSY LOVE SONG or suchlike. Interesting.

Editor: I imagine Colin Pugh's SONGOGRAPHY is going to be useful! As we know so well, Bing's recording career during its most important phase was guided by Jack Kapp - and while Bing sometimes doubted what Kapp wanted, he seemed to have implicit faith in him. Wisely, too. Bing sang the songs of the day (if Decca hadn't allocated them to other singers on their payroll), his film songs, which were automatic, and these out of the run-of-the-mill songs that Kapp obviously selected. The song in question, along with WHERE MY CARAVAN HAS RESTED, the Victor Herbert songs which were NOT popular songs of the day, were clearly inspired by Kapp. The song FOR LOVE ALONE was written by Bruce Siever who we believe was British. Whether or not it came from a show we don't know; but it was not so much a "Bing song". But is is certainly a beautiful record.

CHAS. WILKINSON, Old Coach Lane, Belfast: Liam Nolan who presents record progfammes on Radio Eireann is fond of Bing. On the odd Bing anniversary he has often dedicated the whole of his programme to Bing (11 to 11.50pm) The other night I heard him describe MAYBE as a Crosby record not often heard - but what a lovely song it is.

Editor: Ah! Another beautiful recording - this one was written by George and Ira Gershwin. We have a feeling it WAS used in a film (or show) but was not a Bing special, if you follow. He made

it one, though!! In fact, your Editor would certainly class this among Bing's best - well, say 20 recordings. It is one of the Gershwin's best songs for certain; there is no need, but if you DO analyse it it has a lovely melody, a kind of philosophical - almost weary! - lyric, Bing's feel for the song is tremendous and very evident. Added to this is a really great accompaniment, with surging strings wherein cellos can be heard. This again was Victor Young

> I once heard a Crosby collecfor ponder aloud as to whether Bing's output was too vast to be really appreciated? But Bing was in great demand, of course, and his recordings were wanted regularly. But it is a point: MAYBE, with so many others, is a glorious performance - yet how many outside the Circle and other dedicated Bing fans know of it? Another springs to mind: THINE ALONE, Glorious - yet the companies (with current exception!) go on, and on, with McNAMARA'S BAND, DON'T FENCE ME IN, SWEET LEILANI, MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU - and, oh yes, WHITE CHRISTMAS!
>
> MAYBE did get reissued on the Coral DAY DREAMING album - and by golly! there's another beautiful record - DAY DREAMING! Yet so little heard....

JOHN STILES, 10 Barnhill, Pinner, Midd'x: MARCH OF THE MUSKETEERS always held a mystical ring for me. I didn't even know of the song until I heard it on THE CHRONOLOGICAL series. The sleeve notes give it special praise - and rightly too, for I think it is a gem - beautiful, sincere, singing. If only there were mo recordings of that type from this period.

> Editor: Indeed - the Whiteman days did turn up some remarkable records. HIGH WATER is another where Bing got almost "concert style" - and highly dramatic.
>
> (Incidentally, John has been making comparisons with Barry Ulanov's discography of 1946 and the notes on the Chronological sleeves. He wonders who is correct? Undoubtedly Colin Pugh is more accurate - there has been another 40 years of research since Ulanov's brave effort. But, having said that, there is almost certainly a field where to be absolutely precise about the vocals on Whiteman records is almost impossible. Bing was one of Gaylord, Fulton, Young - as well as the Rhythm Boys.
> John has also 'discovered' Dean Street Records in Soho. This is the shop that offers 10 per cent discount to members on showing ICC card, (plastic token).

DENNIS BARKER, Flat 3, Old Co-Op, Parkend Rd., Yorkley, Glos:

I have read with interest the fors and against on second, third and fourth &c. 'takes' and must agree that if it was only a slight variation at the same recording session, I am not bothered and don't want to hear the same song two or three times. But, if it is a song sung again after a period of perhaps years, e.g. WITHOUT A WORD OF WARNING 1935 and 1951, I could listen all day to these wonderful recordings. I am interested then to compare the differences between Bing's age and his singing.

Editor: Dennis is quite representative of many in what he says - but singing the same song years apart is most certainly a different performance, and cannot be classed as an alternate 'fake'. As Dennis says, these are made at the same session, i.e. Bing wasn't satisfied, bandleader wasn't

satisfied, engineers felt balance was wrong and so on. Thus the song may have been done again and again, with the same arrangement, the band thus playing identically, and only Bing liable to make minute changes in his notes or phrasing. A separate performance, perhaps years later, of the same song presumably brings its own quota of 'takes'!

DAVID PLIMBLEY, 38 Stanley St., Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs:

Just recently I have had the most extraordinary luck. A workmate runs a stall at record fairs that are held around the district where we live. He knows, of course, that I collect anything by Bing and he came to me last week saying that he was visiting a lady whose husband had just died and who had "a few Bing records".

Next morning at work he brought the "few". I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw all 15 of the LPS of BING'S HOLLYWOOD - all in mint condition, including the sleeves! I suppose that somewhere in my youth or childhood I must hafe done something good; I have only ever managed to collect three of these records over the years. I consider myself a very lucky man.

Editor: And so do we David. As we remark elsewhere, you win some...reckon that on today's prices you won about £150! though to many, that set is now priceless.

MISS PAT FORSTER, 12 Cavalier Close, Midhurst, West Sussex:

I was amazed and even shocked to read recently that film stars and directors refused to attend the Cannes Fil Festival because of their fear of terrorist attacks on Americans. Also that an American Symphony orches has cancelled a series of European concerts for the same reason; and that an American jazz singer is not now coming over to perform at Ronnie Scott's Club.

I, and no doubt many others, remember Bing coming over to London in September 1944 at the height of the "doodle-bug" attacks, crossing the Atlantic to get here with all the attendant risk of U-boat attacks, and then going to Normandy where he went up to the front line, and even beyond it - by accident - into German-held territory. And what of Glenn Miller and his Orchestra - Glenn who eventually lost his life!

Whatever is the matter with the present-day performers? And not even a war on - just isolated attacks.

DICK NETTLETON, 111 Faringdon Rd., Stanford-in-the-Vale, Oxon:

Recently I watched the film of the Grace Kelly Story and for the first time, as far as I know, an actor played the part of Bing. I did not get the name of the actor as the credits flash by sometimes on TV. As part of the earlier dialogue Grace Kelly had been told that she would not get the part in COUNTRY GIRL because "Mr. Crosby did not want her". After she had been given the part there was a rehearsal scene after which "Bing" asked her if she had known that he was against her appearing - and then he went on to say that he had been wrong. No attempt was made to produce a Bing "look-alike" but the man playing Bing did use the same friendly and casual manner we are familiar with.

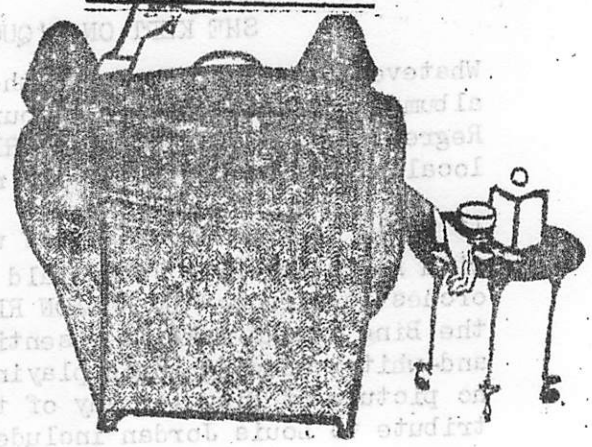
I would be interested to know if there have been any other instances of Bing Crosby being played by other actors in films.

Editor: We commented on this when the Grace Kelly was first shewn on TV several years ago. We don't know of any other instances and like Dick, would be interested to know.

THE RECORD SCENE

BING track EVENTS

AND WHAT A SCENE !



BIDDEN
TO
THE FEAST !

Yes indeed! The famine is - at least temporarily over - and there is this time a feast of new records to delight us. A feast, too, of epicurean extent so that it delights the diehards of the grass-roots and those who cheerfully settle for any period of the wonderful Crosby career.

Indeed, the arid desert is lush and green - we're getting carried away! - and in fact records are queuing up to be reviewed! We may pursue the epicurean theme a little further and ponder as to whether or not we should dally with the entree and other preliminaries or proceed immediately to the main dish - es! Its quite a time since we had the luxury of such a choice. And how we relish it - as you will, too.

We'll deal with them in the order in which we got them; so first on the list is:

LOUIS JORDAN & FRIENDS: Starring: BING CROSBY and others (MCA) MCL 1807

PRICE: £3.75 but this is merely for guidance for, as members will be well aware, shops nowadays seem to charge what they like. It would be nice to 'shop-around' but with the distribution of records as it is one usually has to grab the disc immediately!

The two Bing items start off Side 1:

(Yip Yip De Hootie) MY BABY SAID YES
YOUR SOCKS DON'T MATCH.

Although containing just these two Bing records this album will be snapped up by many; firstly, they are two of the swingiest numbers Bing did and secondly, they are now very scarce. Indeed, they do not appear to have been on micro-groove before.

Louis Jordan was a bandleader/saxophonist/ vocalist - he died in Feb. 1975 and apparently enjoyed much more popularity, or stardom, in the States than he did in Britain. He was an excellent rhythmic partner for Bing - although in fact, at the session in July 1944, Bing did a 'take' of MY BABY SAID YES solo but this was subsequently 'rejected' and the duet with Louis issued.

YOUR SOCKS DON'T MATCH must have caused a smile or two in the studio, bearing in mind Bing's colour-blindness.

Additionally, MY BABY SAID YES contains one of those delightful moments of Crosbyism, sometimes written in the lyric, more often ad-libbed by Bing. On this record, you may recall, it opens with Louis Jordan singing of a girl letting rip at her boyfriend. Bing ripostes with:

SHE KEPT ON A'QUONKING....

Whatever it means, one gets the idea! We were tipped off about this album - most properly! - by our tape/disc consultant LIONEL FAIRPOINT. Regrettably, LOUIS JORDAN & FRIENDS didn't turn up on its own volition locally, but on providing the name and number we got it fairly quickly.

It would be less than fair if we didn't say that among the other artists with Louis are Ella Fitzgerald (1940's style), Louis Armstrong and an orchestra directed by NELSON RIDDLE. It is good entertainment; for many the Bing tracks make it essential. The sleeve is a rather severe black-and-white, showing Louis playing his saxophone on the front. There is no picture of Bing (or any of the guests), but the notes, while paying tribute to Louis Jordan include:

> "Such was (Louis's) fame that on 26 July 1944 at the height of his popularity he went into the studios with fellow Decca artist Bing Crosby to record two sides".

"REPLAY": BING CROSBY: FEDB 5034. Price we paid £3.25p

"REPLAY" is the name of a whole series which, in contrast to the preceding album are in very colourful red, black and gold sleeves. While Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Louis Armstrong and now Bing have appeared largely the series seems to have been dwcoted to modern 'pop'. The wording on the album as to its production seems calculated to confuse; to wit, it says "Sierra Records", distributed by WEA Records Ltd., A Warner Communications Co! This album has the picture of Bing which appeared on the Decca double-album, BING 1976 and 1931.

The material, it will readily be perceived, is of radio origin and has already appeared on the Murray Hill 4-album set. Nevertheless, there will be many no doubt who do not possess the Murray Hill and this album is of exceptionally good quality, obviously coming from first-generation tapes; Titles are:

Side 1:

1. Lady of Spain.
2. Zip A Dee Doo Dah.
3. P.S. I love you.
4. If this isn't love.
5. Ol Buttermilk sky

Side 2:

1. Great day
2. I-got the sun in the morning.
3. Its a good day.
4. You go to my head.
5. The old lamplighter.

Bing is in good voice all thro', and such songs as THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER (not easy to get the commercial issue), PS I LOVE YOU, and LADY OF SPAIN are especially effective. Well worth picking up. Wait a moment! Are we getting confused....is THE LAMPLIGHTER'S SERENADE a different song? Rather think it is; this means there is no commercial issue of THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER.

The sleeve, actually, is one of the most extraordinary you will ever come across. The front has the picture of Bing as stated; the reverse

bears the bare titles with no credits as to composers, orchestra, dates &c! And into the bargain, there are no sleeve notes.

Even if there were doubts about the origin of the material, however, they are dispelled by the way the album starts - the well-known radio orchestral opening of a few bars of BLUE OF THE NIGHT with Ken Carpenter announcing Bing and LADY OF SPAIN. And applause is heard through the album. If you don't have the Murray Hill set this will be quite an acquisition.

"GOLDEN GREATS" "HITS OF THE 40'S"

(MCA) MCM 5031. PRICE: £2.49 or thereabouts.

Duplication of tracks is, of course, the bane of every Crosby collector's life, but in an album with such a heading one is bound to expect the inevitable! This album has two Bing tracks as follows:

MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU
DON'T FENCE ME IN (with the Andrews Sisters) And any collector who hasn't these two tracks umpteen times is indeed a beginner! But when we pick out the Crosby items that is because that is our prime purpose and raison d'etre. Non-Bing should never be taken as derogatory to other artists in a compilation such as this - or indeed, the Louis Jordan album discussed above. HITS OF THE 40'S contains tracks by the Ink Spots, the Mills Brothers, Dick Haymes and other stars of the decade and it will be up to individual members to decide whether or not the album is attractive enough to purchase. We merely bring it to everyone's attention.

BING CROSBY: "REMEMBERING" CONIFER "HAPPY DAYS" CHD123

Price approx £4.35

Now! here is an album to make those tired old jaundiced eyes take on a new glint - and a chance for younger, newer, members to come to grips with the Bing Crosby that set the entire world by the ears way, way back. The memories evoked to those who actually remember those days are almost painful; the thrill of that voice comes over again and again. Here are eighteen faultless, superb, unmatchable performances, encompassing the Crosby range over rhythm, blues and some of the greatest ballads ever written. But - here are the titles and other fascinating details:

Side 1:

1. Please (Anson Weeks & his Orchestra) 16.9.32
2. Did you ever see a dream walking ? (Orch. accompaniment) 11/12/33
3. I've got the world on a string. (Dorsey Brothers Orch) 26.1.33
4. Sweet Georgia Brown (Isham Jones & his Orch) 23.4.32
5. (I don't stand) A ghost of a chance with you (Orchestral acc.)14.10.32
6. My Honey's lovin' arms (Dorsey Bros. Orchestra) 26.1.33
7. Down the old Ox Road (orchestral acc.) 16.6.33
8. How deep is the ocean, (Orch.acc.) 14.10.32
9. Temptation (Orch. acc.) 22.10.33

Side 2:

1. St. Louis Blues (Duke Ellington & his Orch) 11.2.32
2. Dinah (with the Mills Brothers/Bennie Kreuger & his Orch) 16.12.31
3. Somebody stole Gabriel's horn (Dorsey Bros. Orch) 14.3.33
4. Stay on the right side of the road (Dorsey Bros. Orch) 14.3.33
5. Someday, sweetheart (Georgie Stoll & his Orch) 8.8.34
6. Some of these days. (Lennie Hayton & his Orch) 26.5.32
7. Shine (with the Mills Brothers/studio orch) 29.2.32
8. I'm coming Virginia (Paul Whiteman & his Orch) 29.4.27
9. There's a cabin in the pines (Jimmy Grier & his Orch) 16.6.33

What a programme! We were about to say this list comes from the post-Whiteman days and the pre-Decca marathon contract which began in 1934. I'M COMING VIRGINIA, however, slipping back to Whiteman and 1927 is the one exception to that comment. Thus, these songs originally appeared on the Columbia label, or the original Brunswick of Jack Kapp, before Decca took over and maintained 'Brunswick' labelling.

And these have appeared on micro-groove, principally on the CBS Realm album which was issued, almost unbelievably, no less than twenty-one years ago! They have also appeared on various CBS albums/collections, Philips and Fontana EP's. But they are sufficiently rare to make this a fremendously attractive album. Some of the items also appeared on the odd-ball Historia album a few years back.

Just look at the orchestras involved, thus early, in line to record with this phenomenon named Bing Crosby! Dorsey Brothers, Isham Jones, Lennie Hayton, Georgie Stoll, Jimmy Grier and what is generally regarded, then as now, the greatest jazz orchestra of all, Duke Ellington's.

The quality of the transfer, as is general these days mostly, is really first-class. The transfer engineer is Colin Brown who enjoys a considerable reputation in this field and certainly enhances it in this album. Incidentally, the admittedly heavy-handed piano interlude in T'MPTATION is again edited out; we're trying to remember who first did this.

Then there are the Mills Brothers! I know a young man who still finds it difficult to accept that it is human voices (plus one guitar!) and not the orchestra performing when they come in! Truly remarkable - and active right up until the passage of time (more than 50 years) and death reduced them to a duo. Remember? They appeared with Bing in his 50 years' anniversary at Pasadena in 1976 and reproduced DINAH with Bing almost note for note as they had sung it in 1932! Bing and the Mills Brothers had a mutual respect for each other that lasted all through their lives.

The sleeve notes are splendid, too, yet un-named. They are knowledgeable and accurate. It would be nice to reproduce them but that will be unnecessary as no doubt everyone will want this record. But we must use just one line or so:

"THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A CAREER QUITE LIKE THAT OF THE MAN BORN HARRY CROSBY. IT IS DOUBTFUL IF THERE WILL EVER BE ONE AGAIN. HE IS INCOMPARABLE. HE IS UNIQUE. HE IS.....BING!"

It would be easily possible to rhapsodise - yes, 'rhapsodise' IS the word - over this album ad infinitum. It is, like JONZO'S sterling product, truly musical history. Let us use just one more quote from the sleeve notes:

"THE BEST KNOWN VOICE IN THE WORLD FEATURED IN 18 NUMBERS ON THIS RECORD IS HEARD WHEN THE MAN WAS ALREADY ON TO THE LADDER WHICH WAS TO REACH TO THE VERY APEX OF A CAREER THAT LASTED FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS."

Conifer records are obtaining fairly wide distribution these days; even so, there may be difficulty in some areas. We have been in touch with them to ascertain the possibility of mail order. Their reply was that at present they do NOT conduct a mail order service (they suggested we could become a sales agency!) They did also suggest that order placed with local shops would be easily met as their distribution is now fairly comprehensive. So, ask your local record shop to get the album for you. We did - and got it, tho' normally Conifer records are not seen here.

Regarding becoming an agency, it would not be worthwhile even if we could devote the time and the facilities to such a project, for at present this album is our sole interest!

BING CROSBY: "IN DEMAND" (MCA) MCG 6004 also MCGC 6004 cassette. Price: £6.49p

So, if we may again wax whimsical, we come to the main or perhaps prime dish on this current menu. The handsome sleeve proclaims 'Album compiled by John C. Marshall' - the story of which we reported in the previous issue under the heading of CROSSED FINGERS DEPT. Well, sure enough, only a few days later than original scheduled, the album duly appeared early in May. Somehow John (is there no end to this man's talents?) got the ear of Ian McLay at MCA where others have failed to get a reply to even the most sincere, helpful, and earnest letters!

We don't know if JCM had any particular method in selecting the items - perhaps the numbers HE would most like to hear, or doesn't hear enough? - but the result is a most acceptable album. And while the inevitable duplications occur they are not of the 'done-to-death' variety. Indeed, the majority of them have been quite neglected on micro-groove. Without further ado here are the details - and we've included just the year of recording to save you making BING-JUST FOR THE RECORD even more dog-eared than it is:

Side 1:	1.	Getting to know you: Orch. dir. by Victor Young	(1951)
	2.	Love walked in: John Scott Trotter & his Orch.	(1947)
	3.	The isle of Innisfree: " " " " "	(1951)
	4.	The waltz you saved for me: Paradise Island Trio	(1940)
	* 5.	Lost in loveliness: John Scott Trotter & His Orch.	(1954)
	6.	Dearly beloved: " " " " " "	(1944)
	7.	Golden earrings: " " " " " "	(1947)
	* 8.	Out of this world: " " " " " "	(1944)
	* 9.	Rosalie: " " " " " "	(1947)
	*10.	Vaya con Dios " " " " " "	(1953)
Side 2:	*1.	La vie en rose: Axel Stordahl & his Orch.	(1950)
	2.	Beautiful love: Victor Young & his Orch.	(1944)
	3.	Indian summer: John Scott Trotter & his Orch.	(1951)
	4.	It had to be you: " " " 's Dixieland Group	(1952)

(Cont. over....

Sorry about uncorrected errors on next page: Don't know why a J turned up in front of Banda da Lua! (Record 10) 7th para: "LET'S HOPE its impact...." and in para 8, the odd-looking word should, of course, be "re-phrasing".

* 5. The rose of Tralee: John Scott Trotter & his Orch. (1945)
6. The story of Sorrento: Ken Darby Choir & Victor Young & His Orch(1947)
7. I'll remember April: John Scott Trotter & his Orch (1944)
8. The one rose (that's left in my heart): Victor Young & his Orch (1937
9. Yours is my heart alone: John Scott Trotter and his Orch. (1940)
* 10. Granada: JBanda da Lua (1951)

* These tracks have, for some reason, no accompaniment details on the sleeve. We have inserted them. Perhaps MCA don't have BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD - or any other discography?

We share John's enthusiasm for the sleeve which is both colourful and tasteful. The attractive picture of Bing is early 30's - very early we'd say, the whole thing edged with blue and gold, a colour scheme maintained on the rear with David Jacobs's highly acceptable notes in white.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU appears for the first time on LP; others are sufficiently rare to be most welcome to most members, e.g. ROSALIE, GOLDEN EARRINGS, I'LL REMEMBER APRIL, YOURS IS MY HEART ALONE (this is the Americanised version of YOU ARE MY HEART'S DELIGHT, the song immortalised by Richard Tauber), BEAUTIFUL LOVE, INDIAN SUMMER and others. It does NOT include DON'T FENCE ME IN, MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU, McNAMARA'S BAND and so many other songs that seem to be de rigeur in Crosby collections. And despite the price which again, may vary all over the place) there are twenty tracks.

The picture on the front was supplied, it says, by The New Bing Crosby Colour Photoclub; if we do permit ourselves one small criticism of the sleeve it is that we feel the title, BING CROSBY - IN DEMAND should have been more prominent. Should be standing out. As it is, alas, it is almost camouflaged into the background. Happily, the photograph is quite eloquent.

That's it: MCA ably encouraged by our own John Marshall, venture into breaking new ground. Let's its impact will be good enough to justify further innovations.

As indicated above, we don't know what guided JCM in his choice, but for the analytically-minded, the tracks cover 17 years of Bing's career - 1937 to 1954. And it turns out there are elever tracks of the 40's, eight of the 'Fifties - and the sole 30's entry THE ONE ROSE (1937). I remember well the impact Bing's rendering of this lovely song made at that time, in particular his re-phrasing of both the lyric and the melody in the second chorus in such a 'feeling' manner.

As we all know, it is safe to say that if 50 or even a 100 members were asked to chose 20 titles for another album, as surely as night follows day there will always be those who say: "I would have preferred this track, or that track to what was chosen!". That is Crosbyana, one might say. Nevertheless, BING CROSBY - IN DEMAND is a splendid album.

With that, the Conifer and the other records reviewed here we think the claim that there is certainly something for everyone is well justified. Its been a fruitful quarter indeed for Bing records.

We are not done with TRACK EVENTS, however, and matters pertaining. Continue next page

COMPACT DISCS

Most members are no doubt aware that the latest development in record reproduction is the "compact disc" - a small disc containing at least an album number of tracks whereby the sound is reproduced not by a stylus (or needle if you're really old-fashioned!) but by a lazer beam which does not, apparently, touch the record in any way so that their life is virtually eternal - well, as eternal as one can get on this planet of ours. And the way the po lticians continue to shape up, eternal may not necesssrily mean the inifinite period it is used to describe.

However, we're not political, even if we're concerned; we have received the following from MCA in America - the writer is STEVE HOFFMAN who failed to respond to our long and detailed view of the record scene, even tho' he invited it.

DEAR BING CROSBY FAN CLUBS WORLDWIDE,

Pending any .egal snags, I have great news for you! There will be two BING CROSBY COMPACT LASER DISCS released by MCA Records in late 1986. The first will be a greatest hits type compilation called BING CROSBY SINGS AGAIN. It will also contain two unreleased masters. It will also include as a bonus track, the Christmas greeting to Decca employees from Bing, Jack Kapp, Connee Boswell, Victor Young and Bob Crosby, from December, 1940.

The other disc will be a compilation of Bing's best Christmas songs.

These discs are going to look and sound great! I will use all the original source material in making the mono digital transfers.

PLease keep in mind that this will be a compact disc release ONLY. I do not have any release dates for you yet; I just wanted the Crosby clubs to have advance word this is probably going to happen.

If any of you have any questions, please feel free to write to me here at MCA Records.

Best regards,
STEVE HOFFMAN
A & R MANAGER, SPECIAL MARKETS & PRODUCTS.

The enthusiasm of the gentleman shines through this communication but shows he has little appreciation of the Crosby collector's wants. It may be a little unkind to demolish his enthusiasm; but when we read this we thought: "Oh no! The best of Bing - again? WHITE CHRISTMAS - again?" Compact discs are the latest development for the companies to seize upon and get more mileage out of their tracks that have, in most cases, already been done to death. Many of us have listened to - and always enjoyed - Bing from the days of t e wind-up clockwork portable gramophone, complete in leatherette packaging, thro' the 7/6d pick-up adaptor that enabled one to play records thro' the early, primitive wireless sets, then to the 'modern' furniture-styled radiograms (my word! they were SOMETHING!); thence to hi-fi.....Bing always sounded great. Now, the industry wants us to splash out around £300 or so to listen to THE BEST OF BING via a laser beam.....

( )

Our immediate response was much chillier than lukewarm to Steve Hoffman's excited communication. In case, however, we are getting old (undeniably!) jaundiced and a little cynical, we stayed our hand and did not rush into a reply to Mr. Hoffman. Instead, very correctly, we passed the missive to our tape/disc consultant LIONEL PAIRPOINT who did NOT stay his hand but weighed in with both barrels blazing; whether or not the poor man at MCA deserved such a cold douche may be arguable - but what the heck, its usually best to say what you mean! LIONEL wrote :

> Dear Mr. Hoffman,
>
> I have had sight of your letter addressed to the Bing Crosby fan clubs and I hope that I am not presumptuous to assume from this mode of address and the dangling of flabby 'carrots' in the form of 'unissued masters' and a 'bonus' track (which would be of little interest to the general public), that you anticipate some measure of support for this project on compact discs from Bing Crosby enthusiasts.
>
> Do not be too optimistic. I know that I speak for many others when I say that I welcome the news of your venture with the same enthusiasm that I would greet a smack in the chops with a wet flounder. In your own production notes for the sleeve of the issue BOB HOPE IN HOLLYWOOD, you claim to still have access to all the masters since 1943 and yet we are to be inflicted - once more - with a "greatest" hits type of compilation called BING CROSBY SINGS AGAIN (AND AGAIN, AND AGAIN?),
>
> It would not be difficult to accurately forecast the contents of such a 'compilation', and if you consult the catalogues you will discover that such as SWINGING ON A STAR, TOO-RA-LOO-RAL-LOO-RAL, DON'T FENCE ME IN, SWEET LEILANI, MOONLIGHT BECOMES YOU etc. etc. have been issued and reissued a minimum of twenty times each in various compilations. The same criticism also apply to BING'S BEST CHRISTMAS SONGS which are already reissued every year.
>
> Incidentally, I am delighted to see (and the emphasis is your's) that you are considering using 'the <u>original</u> source material'. I am curious as to what the alternative would be - a recording seance?
>
> Crosby enthusiasts may be a fairly single-minded crowd but are hardly foolish enough to splash out up to a thousand dollars for a compact disc-player for the sole purpose of reproducing these two 'compilations', of which we already have enough examples, in sufficient fidelity, to please us!
>
> Sincerely,
> LIONEL PAIRPOINT.

Lionel wrote on his own account, of course, but I think he said what we all probably feel about the matter. That wet flounder has me bothered - as one who abhors fish in any of its forms - wet, dried, fried, canned, and especially those grotesque creatures we see swimming around in TV Nature programmes. 'Twill give me nightmares.....

On the other hand, perhaps the poor man at MCA really <u>does</u> feel enthusiastic. Well, he did!

What Steve Hoffman meant by 'original sources', I believe, means the original 'masters'. Many albums these days are made up of dubbings from private collections.

Some TRACK EVENTS information from LESLIE GAYLOR: I've had a number of requests from members anxious to obtain the album dealt with in the last issue: BOB HOPE IN HOLLYWOOD (MCA 906 US). I see from the latest catalogue from RAY PURSLOW, of THE RECORD CENTRE, 45 Loveday St., Birmingham, B4 6NP that he has some copies in stock. There is also another album by the same producer - JUDY GARLAND FROM THE DECCA VAULTS (MCA 907 US) This latter record has an alternate 'take' of YA TA TA (Talk, talk, talk) and all the other Judy tracks were unissued till now. The BOB HOPE album contains, as stated last time, alternate 'takes' of PUT IT THERE, PAL and ROAD TO MOROCCO.

I would advise, says Leslie, an SAE in the first instance to ascertain availability.

May I suggest to JONZO RECORDS that they put at least 16 tracks on each of their LPs? This surely could be done without any loss of quality. After all its not unusual these days to see even 20 tracks on an album - MCA certainly do it, as do other companies like Spokane although I admit the short radio tracks facilitate this. Many ICC members are retired - or redundant! - and despite a reduced income would doubtless like to add all the Jonzo LPs to their collections. A minimum of 16 tracks and hopefully 20, would mean a considerable saving for members in view of the amount of material involved. I would be grateful if JONZO would lend a sympathetic ear to this suggestion.

Chas. Wilkinson,
8 Old Coach Lane,
Belfast.

Sounds a splendid suggestion to us. It would be more economic for purchasers and, we imagine, for the producers. Not only that, it would considerably speed-up the process on the monumental programme Jonzo is embarked upon. Perhaps they'll tell us what they feel about it.

And on the subject of JONZO, we happened to hear an interview the man conc[illegible]ed, JOHN McNICHOLAS gave on Radio Cambridgeshire on Easter Monday. The interviewer was full of admiration for John's CHRONOLOGICAL series, naturally, and asked a lot of pertinent questions. During the course of this entertaining programme John revealed that he felt Bing's supreme period was 1934-1935 - and you can easily check what Bing was singing in those years. He also gave his opinion that LOVABLE (The Whiteman song, not the Mack Sennett) was Bing's finest band vocal and also had an enthusiastic mention for GET OUT AND GET UNDER THE MOON. The music content of the programme was virtually all Whiteman records with, of course, Bing singing.

It was of importance too to hear John say that the sales of THE CHRONOLOGICAL all[illegible]s to date had been sufficient to make him happy about the continuation of the series. Good news indeed.

We learn of an interesting record project from LES WILSON of the BING'S FRIENDS & COLLECTORS SOCIETY in the States. The material comes directly from the Crosby estate with the warm co-operation of Kathryn. It is being issued on the Broadway label (BR Intermission 135) and

consists almost entirely of Bing performances on television. This again is breaking new ground for though there have been one or two 'private' EPs of Bing on TV, and the Perry Como/Bing album of TV duetting was issued, this is as far as we can ascertain the first album of Bing from TV shows. It will be most interesting to hear it for previous experience has been that the sound quality of TV shows does not reproduce very well. The balance is often awry and contains other defects which are not readily apparent when viewed with the picture! We mention this album as overwhelmingly members have said they want to know about ALL albums, whether or not they are easily obtainable. No doubt it will arrive thro' various specialist outlets here and most probably in The Record Centre, Birmingham, that Les Gaylor mentions above.

Contents of the album (we've seen the sleeve) are as follows:

Side 1:

		Running Time
1.	You're my lucky star (Hollywood Palace 11.1.66)	11.22
2.	On the street where you live (Bing Crosby TV Show 5.10.60)	4.35
3.	Bing Crosby-Johnny Mercer duet: " " " " 5.10.60)	5.47
4.	The Doodling song/Wrap your troubles in dreams: (Bing Crosby TV show - 29.9.60	4.50
5.	Davy Crockett: Bing duet with Buddy Ebsen, Hollywood Palace 1959	.53
6.	Shenandoah: Hollywood Palace, 1959	1.56
7.	If I had my druthers: Bing/Rosemary Clooney, Bing Crosby TV show 5.10.60	4.40
8.	White Christmas: Bing Crosby TV show 10.12.68	1.43

Side 2:

1.	Avalon Town: with Buddy Cole - 5.1.56	2.10
2.	When you're with someone you love: with Buddy Cole 5.1.56	3.21
3.	I'd climb the highest mountain: with Buddy Cole Dixieland Combo 6.1.56	2.12
4.	My baby cares for me: with Buddy Cole Dixieland Combo 6.1.56	2.34
5.	Bing duet with Bing: Bing Crosby TV show 1961.	6.01
6.	There should be rules: " " " " 5.1.56	2.48
7.	A new sun in the sky: with Buddy Cole 5.1.56	1.40
8.	Blue moon: " " " 1956	1.47
9.	There's more to life than living: Hollywood Palace 1959	.56
10.	It all adds up: " " "	.49

The exceptions to TV material appear to be the Buddy Cole items, some of which we are already acquainted with. The running time adds up to a few seconds short of a full hour.

The sleeve notes are fairly brief; an interesting excerpt reads as follows:

> "The tracks on this LP are from Bing's estate. To show you what a beautiful and sentimental man he was - to help Kathryn go through his records and pictures and to sort things before the 'auction', we found pictures we'd sent him he'd saved for years. He was a very sentimental man and a very caring person.
>
> For as long as we live we will always love our Bing - and forever Bing will live in the memory of millions."

Any further news of this album, especially its availability, will be reported in due course.

YOU MAY WELL get the impression that TRACK EVENTS - after the main "dish" - degenerates (if that is really the word) into a miscellany of unconnected items! The reason is that after the feature has been carefully planned and well-nigh executed, further news and items continue to arrive. But records, record information and data are, after all, the true essence of Crosbyana and we get letters which emphasise there cannot be too much of such information.

All of which is a preamble to bringing back ol' LESLIE GAYLOR, who tells us:

> Due to the process of undertaking a clear-out of hundreds of old letters, press clippings, magazines, mail etc. etc. that I'd accumulated over many years, I find I have mislaid a couple of queries I had received within the last couple of months which I fully intended answering. (Know the feeling well, Les - Editor).
>
> Will the writers please note that Bing's recording of AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS has NOT been issued. The basic Les Brown orchestral track was recorded on 31st August 1971 and Bing over-dubbed his voice to this on either the 7th or 8th September 1971. The Daybreak Records data sheets for the recordings, a copy of which I possess, says this song was selected as a "demo" recording for the A TIME TO B JOLLY album of Christmas songs.
>
> The Jack Halloran Singers also accompany Bing on this album under the name of the 'Voices of Christmas' - indeed as they did on AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS.
>
> Glancing at the data sheets again I note the other six songs Bing recorded on 7-8 September 1971 have the letters "O/D" against them, indicating 'Over-dubbed'.
>
> AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS has the letters 'D/D' against it, whatever this means, as well as 'O/D'. Hope this is clear.

Editor: Suggest Les himself gave the answer - wouldn't 'D/D' mean "demonstration disc"? The queries members dig up for Leslie !

AN IMPORTANT CORRECTION ! In the last issue of BING we included an article about Bing's involvement with the Del Mar race-track - IT STARTED WITH A BING! This story was much enjoyed by members but we inadvertently got our credits wrong. We're sorry and delighted to print the following from CHARLES BAILLIE, California:

I'm sure you get so much mail that its often difficult to remember who sent what! It was I who sent the Del Mar story - I'm not concerned with personal credit but I am concerned that it was credited to a New York newspaper when, in fact, it came from THE LOS ANGELES TIMES. And the writer was BILL SHIRLEY, a LA Times staff writer who has always been very good to Bing, as has JIM MURRAY, another on that staff. We want to keep it that way!

AND SO DO WE CHARLES: SO HAPPY TO OBLIGE, AS BING SAID TO MR. MERCER ! again, our regrets and apologies to Charles and BILL SHIRLEY.

NEVER ON LP

The feature detailing Bing's records under the above heading was another that provoked a lot of interest. It was skilfully compiled for us by FRANK WILGAUS of Cleethorpes, and Michael Crampton of Leeds, who in the process said they would welcome corrections or additions. Strangely, there have been few! A lot of letters commenting but few real amendments. We feel that this may almost certainly be because there are very few of our members who are in a position to be pedantic about it. This is because the picture is quite confusing.

Most were greatly surprised that so few of Bing's records had not appeared on LP even tho' the figure was even more reduced when all the independent or 'private' LPS were taken into account. You will recall that out of about 2,300 recordings only 178 had not appeared on LP. This figure was further reduced to 62 if the aforementioned private/independent issues were taken into account - see the Dec. 1985 issue of BING.

It would be a colossal error, however, to suppose that because of these statistics one could, if the funds were available, go out and buy all Bing's recordings with the exception of 62 - or 178! As explained in December there were the original 10" LPs, deleted almost 30 years, it may surprise some to learn. True many of them were subsequently reissued as 12" and augmented by a further 4 tracks. But a fair number were never issued again. Then there are the independents so difficult to track down in many cases. And even then the expense is considerable. We once ordered three such albums from the States and when they arrived by post, the postman handed us a demand for VAT, import charge, handling charge, custom duty with the result that the albums cost three times as much as was paid for them! That doesn't always happen, of course. If marked as 'Unsolicited Gifts' you can get away with it! But there is always the possibility.

And, of course, the vast majority of Bing's 12" LPs have long disappeared from the catalogues. The record industry itself has undergone radical changes. Whereas a few years ago records stayed available for years, now they are deleted within months, if not weeks! So much reliance has to be placed on secondhand shops, junk shops, jumble sales, Oxfam and similar avenues. And even with new issues one has to snap up the record when seen - for surely it will become rare in about 3 months! Nevertheless, although we're often inclined to grizzle and grumble, Bing's recordings have been treated handsomely in the way of reissue.

The corrections, however, to our original list are as follows - very few as we said above:

YOU'VE GOT ME WHERE YOU WANT ME has now appeared on a 12" LP entitled SONGS BY HARRY WARREN - other items non-Bing. This LP was issued for 'promotional purposes' and is not, therefore, a commercial LP.

EVERYWHERE YOU GO: is on record 2 of BING SINGS 12" LP RD4-127-2 'Readers Digest' set.

SWINGIN' DOWN THE LANE: is on record 3 of the same set.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU: - now reissued on BING CROSBY - IN DEMAND, as you have read in this issue.

We might cautiously suggest that winds up TRACK EVENTS - except for

YOU WIN SOME

I want to tell you of my recent stroke of luck! I was at my son's jumble sale - reluctantly - and saw a box of records on the floor. I thought twice about scrambling on hands and knees as I've had a lot of back trouble recently, but decided to chance it. And what a reward ! I found a single (GALA) of Bing's MY OWN INDIVIDUAL STAR and NEVER BE AFRAID, complete with a picture of Bing on the label. I'd not only not got the record but had never heard him sing them either! I thought stories like that happened only to other people. You tend to get a bit disillusioned after about the 100th jumble sale - but I'll certainly be more enthusiastic next time!

JANET SNOW (London Colney)

Ah! the joys of collecting - and that Gala 45rpm single, issued in 1958 in conjunction with the GALA 12" album, NEVER BE AFRAID - a musical version of THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES..... then

AND, ALAS, YOU LOSE SOME

En route to Manchester by train a week before ChristmasI was idly perusing some woman's magazine and noted under POP RELEASES (!) a new Bing Crosby Christmas album, CHRISTMAS CRACKERS (sic). Gathered it must be the LP I had been vainly awaiting for so many years, containing one of my top recordings of Bing - O HOLY NIGHT. On reaching sunny Manchester headed at a rate of knots for the HMV Shop and purchased a copy of CHRISTMAS CLASSICS at something like £3.49p and departed rejoicing mightily. On reaching home rejoicing rapidly receded - on placing the LP on the turntable I was greeted with a loud selection of snaps, cracles, and pops worthy of a super breakfast cereal. I picked up the LP carefully by the edges in approved fashion to examine for blips &c. - and immediately dropped it onto the sharp edge of a clock radio which lay in wait below. Since it was now severely marked I cannot return it to the shop so will have to buy another copy next year - hopefully. It also taught me the lesson that one should wherever possible contain one's impatience and purchase such gems locally. I could hardly make a special trip to Manchester to change it anyway. In addition to this being a very poor pressing I note that they have also omitted two songs. Why on earth they do this I cannot imagine. I wonder whether others got bad copies?

FRANK WILGAUS (CLEETHORPES)

Editor: Quite grievous....

I believe there is something in the tax situation in the States which causes the record companies to limit albums to five tracks per side. Perhaps someone in America can tell us further about this.

TO THE MEMBER ASKING: "GOING HOLLYWOOD" can be found on the Soundtrack Album "THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT" Part 1.....

TRACK EVENTS refuses to give way! And all those who have been bemoaning the dearth of Crosby records now have something to think about - as well as saving up! But firstly, we are getting letters concerning the vastly varying price of the IN DEMAND album! One wrote to say he had been told it would cost more than £7.00 and was delighted to find it cost £5.49. Others have found it at £6.39, £6.49 - and £6.70p! We are completely in the hands of the retailers now that price maintenance doesn't operate. We believe MCA's 'recommended' price is £6.49.

And looking back, we're not satisfied with the review of the album; we didn't, for instance, say that the recording quality is first-class - to the extent its difficult to believe these are aged 78s. Thus the voice is, as Leslie Gaylor is always telling us, always well FORWARD. By which is meant that Bing's full rounded, dark, rich tones are heard to the best effect.

> BE SURE TO WRITE TO THE BBC's PRESENTERS REQUESTING TRACKS FROM "IN DEMAND" - the field is so fertile with great renderings such as STORY OF SORRENTO, ISLE OF INNISFREE, GOLDEN EARRINGS, THE ONE ROSE and so on. AND BE SURE TO MENTION "....FROM THE NEW CROSBY ALBUM!" we must do everything to make this album the success it richly deserves. We must try and get people to LISTEN again.

Incidentally, we've changed our minds about that picture of Bing on the front. In fact, we think its earlier than 30's - might even pre-date the Rhythm Boys!. With a recording career spanning 50 years its a bit of a problem to fit a picture to the subject - but this is most attractive and seems to fit the voice. And now, to hand is:

BING CROSBY: THE RADIO YEARS: VOLUME 2: NCP 707 PRICE £2.99 (or thereabouts!)

The sleeve follows the same design and format of Volume 1 except, of course, for the new details of contents, and the background colour of the front of the sleeve is red instead of blue. These albums come from PRECISION RECORDS & TAPES who do NOT conduct mail-order facilities. You can only give the label and no. to your record shop and hope they can get it for you - not Woolworths!

The sleeve also includes: "WITH MILLS BROTHERS, PEGGY LEE, DENNIS DAY.

Titles : Side 1

1. The Jones Boy (17.2.54)
2. Vaya con Dios. (24.9.53)
3. On a slow boat to China (with Peggy Lee) (15.12.48)
4. You belong to me (30.11.52)
5. Wish you were here (30.11.52)
6. Its only a paper moon (6.11.46)

Side 2:

1. Up a lazy river (with the Mills Bros.) (25.10.49)
   Paper doll " " " " "
2. The old lamplighter (1.1.47)
3. Its a good day (11.6.47)
4. PS I love you (4.10.53)
5. Clancy lowered the boom (with Dennis Day) (30.3.49

The orchestra is JOHN SCOTT TROTTER'S, except for THE OLD LAMPLIGHTER and ITS A GOOD DAY, which has Skitch Henderson wielding the baton.

You are probably familiar with these performances - they have been on THE GOLDEN AGE OF AMERICAN RADIO/ THE MURRAY HILL SET and forsooth, on the new REPLAY

we've just reviewed in this issue!

The quality is staggeringly good again; these must come from the original tapes used for the broadcasts. Apart from these items which have appeared on other records, most members will have heard these possibly on indifferent tapes - tapes which had been dubbed endlessly. On these you hear Bing, and certainly the orchestra, as you haven't heard them before. And the other bugbear of indifferent tapes - variable speed - is not present here. The sound is tremendous.

Again, the sleeve notes are by Dave Dexter, Sherman Oaks, CA - strengthening the belief these come from theoriginal tapes, i.e. The Crosby Estate. And the sleeve notes conclude:

> "One looks back on Bing's achievements today in awe. No performer in history was more successful. He recorded 2100 songs and a majority of them were profitable. He popularised more songs than any other singer who ever lived. His radio and television shows garnered the highest ratings; and his films all made big money and are still exhibited throughout Planet Earth.
>
> But notes for a Crosby album require no long biographical stats. His voice says it all."

You note that th gh 9 tracks are listed, four of them consist of TWO songs, thus making it worthwhile for playing time. But one is forced to the conclusion that - from a duplication angle - things are getting out of hand!

LESLIE GAYLOR asks if any member can help him obtain a copy of the record we reviewed, THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF CHRISTMAS, Holiday HDY 1929. It contains an odd version of WHI"E CHRISTMAS. We were surprised to find it in a local shop - part of a job lot of Christmas records they had acquired. It was dated 1981.

We continue to get the occasional letter concerning some slightly mysterious records/cassettes on the SUIZA label - BING CROSBY 20 GOLDEN GREATS, VOLS I & II. A member in Dublin tells us these can be got in O.K. Record Shops - where er they are - for £2.99 each. On enquiry to our disc consultant, LIONEL FAIRPOINT, he tells us these people are"pirating the pirates"! They re of German origir , it seems and consist of quite interesting radio items that have appeared on various independent albums, a real hotch-potch which, nevertheless, would certainly be worth acquiring: Vol I consists of:

LPF 22014: Manhattan/Swinging on a star/Loch Lomond/Take it easy/The moon won' talk/Gypsy in my soul/The one I love/Amor/Till we meet again/Thanks for the memory --- You couldn't be sweeter/At a perfume counter/Let's take the long way home/Magic is the moonlight/Floating down the old green river/Lovelight in the starlight/Hip hip hooray/We mustn't say Goodbye/ Poor little rich girl/Feudin' and fightin'.

Volume 2: (LPF 22015) Blacksmith Blues/Come what may/Lady in the stamp collection/I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls/Glow-worm/Feet up/Pittsburg Pennsylvania/Please Mr. Sun/Cockeyed optimist/Where the red, red, roses grow ---- Girl in the bonnet of blue/Everything I have is yours/A thousand violins/Dark moon/Now that I need you/Maybe its because/When the midnight choo-choo leaves for Alabam/If I had my way/Blues my naughtie sweetie gave to me/Down yonder.

Quite a package of miscellaneous radio 'sneaked' one might say from all over the place but well worth picking up at the price - if you see them!

TRADING POST

Our feature wherein members may advertise without charge their wants in Crosbyana, e.g. records, tapes, book,s pictures &c. There is a nominal charge of £1 for non-Crosby items. This is a facility for members and insertions should be restricted to a maximum of six lines - there is no intention to turn BING into a list of records &c. for sale.

From the next issue there will be a charge of £5.00 for items which can be considered "trade" or "commercial",e.g. offers to tape complete radio series, or record offers which cannot be considered "private".

The suggestion was put forward in the last issue that there may be room for a Crosby "advertising" magazine which WOULD consist of lists of records and so on. There has been one enquiry and that came from STEVE THOMPSON in Ireland whom, you may recall, returned to Ireland after 20-odd years in the States and now has a vast collection of old radio shows, including Bing's with the lesser-known Ford programmes as late as 1957 and 1958. He is almost finished completing his catalogue and it will be made available just as soon as possible. As to whether he could operate - in due course - a magazine of the type mentioned Steve wonders if it would be possible, based as he is in Ireland - 13 Avignon, Milford Grange, Castletroy, Co. Limerick, Ireland. We don't see any difficulties. Ireland (republic that is) seems to be treated as part of the UK at least as far as post is concerned. Irish members get their BING as quickly as anyone here.

STEVE also tells us in advance he has "the marvellous shows Bing did for The Catholic Charities and The Spanish re-broadcasts of KMH as well as a beautiful 15-minute programme of Bing, Dixie and the kids recorded in the Crosby home on Christmas morning, 1938 - with Ken Carpenter present".

So, it seems STEVE THOMPSON has a lot to offer in the way of "new" material.

KEITH RICHMOND, 27 Glebelands, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 2BZ (Phone 079 82 3463) FOR EXCHANGE ONLY: Bing & The Andrews Sisters CPS Nos. 80/91/112 (three albums) and BING IN PARIS AH122 Will offer each album plus £2 for any of BING'S HOLLYWOOD No. 1, 2, 6-12. Will also consider exchanging all 4 albums for any 3 of BING'S HOLLYWOOD as an alternative.

NEIL ROBINSON,19 Alder Grove, Stapenhill, Burton-on-Trent, DE15 9QR: I am seeking 78s still, especially the 041 series and the 047...series. These appear most difficult to find, especially at record fairs.

PHILLIP REEVES, Coxwalls Cottage, Ash End, Henstridge, Templecombe, Somerset BA8 OPN has for sale Bing Crosby 78s, all on Brunswick, all good condition: 01992: 02653: 030044: 03313: 03837: 03889. Offers ?

ALASTAIR AIREY, 4c St. Phillips Sq. London SW8:

ALASTAIR AIREY cont.: Bing items for sale including 78s, LPs, tapes, books, also old opera 78s. Phone day-time 01-228-3857. (Alastair is returning to New Zealand and much as he would like, he cannot transport his vast Crosby collection).

> MY THANKS to those who enabled me, via cassette, to hear Bing sing I DREAMT I DWELT IN MARBLE HALLS. Another of those out-of-the-ordinary songs Bing sang on radio but not on record - NOT until it turned up on "radio albums", anyway. The song came from a show, THE BOHEMIAN GIRL and if you saw the TV tribute to that grand old man, MANNY SHINWELL, you heard it played as a kind of theme, and illustrating his childhood.

FRANK KELLY, 39 Southwold Crescent, South Benfleet, Essex, SS7 5SR. (Phone: 0268-793444) 100 LPs for sale, including BING'S HOLLYWOOD, BOTH SIDES OF BING, ETC. ETC. SAE FOR LIST

DENNIS ATKINS, Flat 12, Savnic Close, Pontypridd St. Cadoxton, Barry, South Glam: WANTED: Leak pre-amplifier and amplifier in good working order. (Phone 720264)

KMH SONGS available on C90 cassettes, period 10th June 1937 to 9th May 1946. The running order will be as broadcast and as listed in BING. Sound quality is compatible with radio material of the period; one or two tracks do show disc damage but due to rarity and for completeness they are left in. Price incl. postage is £3.00 each for UK members, £4 by airmail overseas. Whole project covers 14 cassettes: SAE to BERT DAY 35 Galla Crescent, Dalbeattie, DG5 4JY: Phone 0556-611215.

FRANK IFIELD - WANTED - Columbia LP of London Palladium pantomime, BABES IN WOOD, original cast recording, believed to be 1967. Contact HARRY NOLAN, Spokane, 7 Saxon Rise, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN40 1TF - phone 0424-214312.

BING - GOLDEN MEMORIES Boxed set of 6 LPs (1928-1934) Columbia Special Products (P6 14370 US) Mint condition: offers (up to 6 weeks after publication of BING) or £25 secures. Winner only notified unless SAE. Write: DEREK PARKES, 66 Firs Rd., Winterslow, Salisbury, Wilts, SP5 1SW (Phone: Winterslow 0980-862688) (Sounds a fine opportunity at fair cost)Ed.

We have received, via Keith Parkinson (Australian rep) an impossibly long list of albums for auction, In the belief what is available may be desirable to our members, the main items are the GOING HOLLYWOOD series of albums, Nos. 1 - 15 transcribed by Gordon Wall though there are other albums. Min. bid asked for is 10 US dollars, which is about £6.70 to UK members. Offer stays open to Dec. '86. Further information from PETER MURPHY, PO BOX 133, Elwood, 3184, Australia, but enclose two International Reply Coupons.

We are given to understand in a roundabout way that the FRED REYNOLD'S FILM BOOK, so anxiously awaited, is now almost ready. Wish we could be more precise.

BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD is the hardback volume containing ALL Bing's commercial recordings, e.g. from 1926 to 1977 in both alphabetical and chronological order. Invaluable to all interested in Bing and for browsing/reference. With this you no long need ask: "Did Bing record so-and-so?" This book tells you. Obtainable from JOHN JOYCE, 21 Birchfield Gardens, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE9 7TJ It also contains accompanists, vocal partners &c. Price is £3.50 post paid for UK members; Europe £4.00; US/Canada £4.00 surface mail, £6.00 airmail - remittances in sterling to JOHN JOYCE, ICC/Ac.

GERRY McCARTHY, 42 St. Josephs Rd., Greenhills Est., Dublin 12, Ireland:

Seeks to acquire a video of the show BING - HIS LIFE AND LEGEND, the lavish 100-min. production shewn a year after Bing's death - at least it was on Ulster TV; also the Count Basie album (BING 'N' BASIE) and TIE A YELLOW RIBBON. Gerry says records/videos are hard to come by in Dublin. He is a new member, obviously very enthusiastic; met Bing twice in Ireland and saw his (Palladium) show at the Gaiety Theatre Dublin. Bing posed for a picture with Gerry's wife and children. The show I remember)Ed.) was compered by Wm. Holden? Is this the one? Gerry also asks if there is any news of a film, THE BING CROSBY STORY. To the latter, we know of none; and frankly, we doubt it will eventuate. The cinema is surely dying - disaster movies, Bond, and near-pornography films seem a desperate last effort to save the industry - which is, of course, busy making films for TV. And the latter has been the prime cause of the decline of the cinema. Its our view that THE JOLSON STORY and JOLSON SINGS AGAIN, two splendid musical films, got in just in time ! Perhaps its too late for Bing.... Gerry would appreciate correspondence on Bing, books, recorded tributes, and so on - especially videos. (VHS)

> BING CROSBY - IN DEMAND is almost certainly a UK MCA project - an unusual situation in that normally it is WE in the UK who are frustrated because projects are Japanese, German, or American-inspired. Its unusual for MCA to pull one out of the hat like this - most of their issues originate in the US. It lands us in a piquant, if not tricky situation! There is no doubt at all that our members in America, Canada, Australia and Europe will be eager to get the album. How, is the question. Many of them will have contacts here who are prepared to do the necessary....

This is particularly pertinent for we have just this very day received a most uncharacteristically dispiriting letter from normally enthusiastic Judge Francis Smith in New York. Frank says he is depressed over the Crosby record situation and indeed feels that we have come to the end of the road! Surely not.

RON DANIELS in Australia has written, too, on the record situation Down Under. "Nothing much doing," says Ron. "All we seem to get every few years are the singalong albums (101 Gang Songs &c) coming out on different labels. I do wish they wouldn't call them CROSBY CLASSICS, however, there should be a law against it!"

CURIOUS FIND! JIM LOWE (North Woolwich): Running thro' a heap of 78s recently - mostly rubbish - I chanced upon an old "master" and saw the title PLAY ME HEARTS & FLOWERS sung by one JOHNNY DESMOND. Wasn't particularly interested, but on turning the record over saw WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS, singer Bing Crosby and this information was WRITTEN on with a ball-pen! I wondered 'Could this possibly be the 'fluff'?' when the stallholder said give me twenty-pence and its yours. The record looked pretty trashy but on playing it was delighted to hear "Sang the wrong melody, we'll play it back..etc. etc." Now I know of just one other 78 of this blow-up. Any ideas regarding this curio? The source intrigues me for as far as I know only keen members have this - on tape at that?"

Editor: It IS a curio...obviously someone had some pressings made perhaps hoping to reap a rich reward? Anyone know?

THE

CHRONOLOGICAL - VOL 6

BING CROSBY: JONZO RECORDS: JZ-6

Well did you evah? Despite the voluminous space given to record releases, two more turned up when all was nicely scheduled to complete this issue. But as records are meat and drink to everyone we cheerfully rethink the format to include, firstly, Volume 6 of this unique and quite remarkable series. As with JZ 3-4-5, this new volume is devoted to 1928, and the sleeve notes (Colin Pugh again) tell us this takes us half-way thro' Bing's time with Paul Whiteman when he - Bing - was aged 25 and earning 150 dollars a week; and thinking, no doubt, he'd really made it, reached the apex of his career.

All except the rabid collectors will be pleased that this volume contains no alternate takes. Thus there are 16 numbers out of 16! On the other hand there are only six Crosby solos - which means many are going to be bewildered and perplexed once more as they hear tracks which would appear to have no vestige of Bing. This particular reviewer, for instance, hears the CHRISTMAS MELODIES for the first time after about 56 years of following Bing! But can trace not even a hum from Mr. C. The sleeve is as comprehensive and elegant as all the previous issues. The following are the titles but we do not include all the detail from the sleeve as purchasers will have it to mull over. And here's a cautionary word from the producer, JOHN McNicholas: there must be a price increase next time as revenue from sales is now not enough to finance further issues:

Side 1:
1. 'T'aint so honey, 'taint so. (Bing solo)
2. I'd rather cry over you (RhythmBoys part of chorus)
3. I'm on the crest of a wave (Bing solo with 'chorus')
4. That's my weakness now (Rhythm Boys)
5. Georgie Peorgie (Bing in chorus only)
6. Lonesome in the moonlight (Bing in chorus Only)
7. Because my baby don't mean 'Maybe' now (Bing solo - with vocal backing)
8. Out of town gal (Rhythm Boys)

Side 2:
1. Ma Da Da (Rhythm Boys)
2. That's grandma (Rhythm Boys)
3. Christmas Melodies Part 1 - Bing and 'chorus' but see above.
4. " " " 2 - " " " " " "
   (Titles are : Silent Night/O Holy Night/Adeste Fidelis
5. My suppressed desire (Rhythm Boys)
6. Rhythm King (Rhythm Boys)
7. Let's do it (let's fall in love) - Bing with 'chorus' but note extremely doubtful.
8. Making whoopee (Bing solo - heard all right here!)

('Chorus' when used above means the battery of Whiteman vocalists joining in - Jack Fulton, Austin Young, Charles Gaylord and often Al Rinker & Harry Barris).

Some data regarding Bing's presence on a track is based on recording notes showing he was in the studio, and certainly with the band. This is surely another slice of recording history and, as we continually say, a comprehensive chronological project of this nature must often contain the paradoxically incomprehensive. The sound quality is again stupendous.

JONZO RECORDS, PO BOX 212, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 7LD.

And the second of the "last-minute" albums to reach us just in time to be included is:

CROSBYANA : VOLUME 5 - BROADWAY RECORDS, INTERMISSION BR-135

Address: Broadway Intermission, Box 100, Brighton, Michigan 48116, USA.

This is the album instigated by the BING'S FRIENDS & COLLECTORS SOCIETY, President Larry Gunn, 170 Terminal Avenue, Menlo Park, Calif. 94025, USA. Full details of the contents appear on page 32 of this issue.

Whatever else may be said, this is an INTERESTING album! It consists of items from TV shows - and most contrastingly - Bing with Buddy Cole doing his off-the-cuff radio songs. AVALON TOWN by the way is NOT the AVALON with which we are familiar! As we suggested, there is something about TV sound minus the picture which is not entirely satisfactory. The orchestra is loud and brash, its not easy to catch Bing's asides, and so on. The duet with Johnny Mercer takes in most of their commercially recorded tracks of the past such as MR. GALLAGHER & MR. SHEAN,/ON BEHALF OF THE VISITING FIREMEN/MR. MEADOWLARK and so on. The duet with Rosie also takes care of several songs. Its happy, and cheerful - and Bing IS in good voice, circa 1959 and 1960 on TV. Can anyone tell me what 'Druthers' are?

The Buddy Cole tracks are their usual crisp self with Buddy's pyrotechnic and highly technical playing which is not, alas, always to my taste. I prefer the Carmen Cavallaro kind of accompaniment. I know this is liable to upset a lot of members but there's room for all shades of opinion.

In BLUE MOON (which I hadn't heard before) Buddy's piano solo is quite outrageously UNmusical - and I defy anyone to listen to it and say otherwise. How Bing picked up the melody again is a remarkable tribute to his 'ear'. But we can say, honestly, is is an INTERESTING album selected by the Society's members from Bing's own collection.

It is now traditional to have articles annually about WHITE CHRISTMAS, Bing and Irving Berlin as Yuletide approaches. These appear in papers all over the world, dealing with Bing's view of the song's potential, Irving's eccentric piano, and so on. Most of them are okay, containing only the usual errors about ages ages and how many million copies sold - and the title of the one opposite is rather inept, for if Bing did get the world crooning (ugh!) it certainly wasn't as late as 1942 with WHITE CHRISTMAS. But this did contain one major error which we just couldn't let go. So we wrote to the editor and the following reply was printed in a prominent box:

MAILBAG: IN DEFENCE OF BING

Very belatedly, I've just seen a copy of your issue of December 20 last which contained an article, A SONG THAT TAUGHT THE WORLD TO CROON. The article was quite agreeable except for one major error of fact. It stated that Bing's first marriage ended in divorce.

That is not so. Bing Crosby was never involved in any divorce proceedings, neither his own nor anyone else's. His first wife, Dixie Lee, died in 1952 after 20 years of marriage; Bing remarried 5 years later, Kathy Grant, who became his widow.

R. BRISTO,
SECRETARY, International Crosby Circle,
Cwmbran, Gwent.

Hits That Made History

A song that taught the world to croon

SITTING at his piano with its gadget which transposed his tunes out of the key of F — the only one in which he could play — 54 - year - old Irving Berlin thumped out the melody of the number he had composed the evening for the movie Holiday Inn.

The man who was to sing it, 38-year-old Bing Crosby, sat casually in a canvas chair in a corner of the Paramount set on that autumn day in 1947, and delivered his verdict.

"I don't think you need worry about this one, Irving," he said. It was the most masterly understatement in the history of pop.

Composed in only a few hours, against a tight deadline, Berlin himself dismissed it as "only a nice sentimental little song."

But the talents of the man who had written 3,000 songs, and the singer who invented the way a pop song should be sung, combined to produce the best-selling disc of all time.

For, at the last count, White Christmas had broken all

Here's your chance to join in selecting future articles on Hits That Made History. If you have a favourite star from the names listed [illegible] Avenue, Reading, giving your name and address, and which star — from those listed — you would like to see featured.

Paul Anka, The Beach Boys, Chuck Berry, Pat Boone, David Cassidy, Dave Clark, Alice Cooper, Connie Francis, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Little Richard, Paul McCartney, Guy Mitchell, Monkees, Ruby [illegible], Mike Oldfield, Donny Osmond, Gilbert O'Sullivan, Sex Pistols, Simon and Garfunkel, The Who.

records — to sell an incredible 56 million copies.

It has been sung in over 100 languages, included in a ballet, played underwater, sung by a choir of howling dogs and orchestrated for typewriters and vacuum-cleaners ...

But, to millions, it was — and still is — Bing Crosby's song.

As a young man, he had raved it up across America as vocalist with Paul Whiteman's jazz orchestra, and learned his phrasing and timing from the jazz greats who backed him.

"I just wanted to sing naturally," he once remembered. "I used to listen to classic singers forcing the volume and the high notes, and I couldn't understand a word they were saying.

"I just wanted to sing conversationally and easily, and let the people hear what I was saying."

He had had hits before, but when White Christmas came along, Bing Crosby found to his surprise that he'd become the most popular singer who ever lived.

By the time he was 50, he was a multi - millionaire with interests in racetracks, golf-courses, oil-wells, gold and uranium, real estate and baseball teams. "He doesn't pay taxes," quipped his friend Bob Hope, "he just calls up the Treasury and asks them how much they need!"

But none of Crosby's success came by accident. He recorded over 4,000 songs in 25 years and, during one hectic week in New York, played eight shows a day.

He couldn't read music, but his pitch and rhythm were uncanny. "I'd get the orchestra to play a song through once, and then I'd record it," said the man who became known as "one-take Bing."

Irving Berlin's hits ran into hundreds — from Alexander's Ragtime Band to Easter Parade, Blue Skies and There's No Business Like Show Business.

He made over two million dollars from White Christmas, but admitted: "I've written better songs. Bing just managed to make something special out of it."

Bing's first marriage ended in divorce. "I can't show my feelings," he once admitted. "But that doesn't mean I haven't any. It's just something I've inherited. My mother was the same way."

Yet, by the summer of 1956, all that had changed. Crosby had fallen in love with Kathryn Grant, a Columbia Pictures starlet 30 years his junior, and from that moment his life was never the same again.

They married, moved to a remote ranch-house 400 miles north of Hollywood and had three children within four years. "I'm busier and happier than I have been for years," Crosby reported.

In 1974, a grapefruit - sized, non-malignant fungus was removed from his lung, but he recovered astonishingly quickly, and was soon once more recording and making TV appearances.

In 1976, he appeared at the London Palladium to a rapturous reception. One critic wrote: "When we hear Bing Crosby, we hear the voice of an old and treasured friend."

In his early seventies, Crosby — still remarkably fit — walked at least three miles a day, and played golf from a handicap of nine.

● Bing Crosby ... "I just wanted to sing naturally."

In September 1977, after taping a Christmas TV show in London with his family, Bing Crosby travelled to Spain for a golfing holiday. It was there that, one sunny afternoon, he died on the green after suffering a massive heart attack.

"I can't think of a better way for a golfer who sings for a living to finish the round," said Kathryn, fighting back tears when she spoke to reporters only hours after hearing the news.

Bing Crosby, probably the most influential singer of the century, was 74 when he died. He maintained that the last 20 years were the happiest of his life.

THE BOXED SET of 6 LPs PLUS the bonus album, BING & FRIENDS (World Records) a fine collection of Bing, is available. Offers to JIM RAMSAY, Llanthewy Cottage, Llanthewy Vache, Pontir, GWENT. Condition is reported unplayed.

YOU HAVE SEEN THE BOMBSHELL re. the BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY on inside of front cover. We await further details but it must be said that KEN TWISS, who formed the society after Bing's death with a genuine desire to keep Bing's memory and achievements in the forefront, seems to meet with nothing but aggravation and non-coperation at every turn. Currently the Society is involed with getting a well-known road renamed BING CROSBY DRIVE, purchasing Bing's birthplace, forming a high-level committee to press for a Bing commemorative stamp &c. It holds its annual tribute to Bing in May.

FRANK MURPHY, THE NEW BING CROSBY COLOUR PHOTO CLUB, 32 Ferndale Avenue, WALLSEND, TYNE & WEAR, NE28 7NE not only offers a tremendous selection of Crosby pictures but Frank is now pursuing our suggestion of a UK reprsentative of the Historical Society. This should be to the benefit of all - but remember, when writing to Frank enquiring after the BCHS enclose an SAE. And of course, photos always available, together with a BULLETIN.

ROY CHAPPELL, our (professional) singer with A TOUCH OF THE BINGS - he sang at the Gonzaga statue unveiling you remember) has been holding 40's style concerts in and around Manchester (where he is based) complete with ration cards, tin-helmets, air-raid sirens - and singing Bing songs. Roy has never failed to boost Bing in all his performances of the last 20 years.

STAN HELLENS, of Cranham, Essex, spent last Christmas in Cyprus and was delighted, on arrival at the hotel, to be regaled with Bing singing WHITE CHRISTMAS, ADESTE FIDELIS, SILENT NIGHT and so on; and this continued all through the holiday period. Happily, as Stan says, "no escape"!!

Here we go again, to coin a phrase, with the KRAFT MUSIC HALL song listing. They start next page and have been specially renumbered for those who wish to detach them and keep together ina file or folder. The format will be changed for subsequent issues because with so many programmes to be covered, more must be dealt with in each issue of BING. But these four final pages give the start.

There have been mutterings that the price of the IN DEMAND album was too high, bearing in mind the price is varying as said elsewhere. The quick answer is: What isn't, these days? But more rationally, we think this feeling is prompted by the original belief that it would cost "around a fiver". But consider: if you pick up 78s these days in mint condition (unplayed is out of the question of course) you can expect to pay at least 50p but usually a good bit more. On the album there is the equivalent of ten 78s - but in fact, it would need a lot more than that for they were not conveniently coupled - so hat would cost £5.00 for copies of dubious quality, almost certainly in tattered covers indeed if in any at all. In the album, you have the "ten" 78s, or 20 titles, in pristine, unplayed condition, transferred using the latest technology AND in a brilliant sleeve. While we would have welcomed a "fiver" bargain we don't feel disposed to grumble!

The many friends of RENEE CHESTER have been quick to write and wish her well - her Tenerife address was in the previous issue. If anyone would like to wish ENA HOOLEY well in her bereaved post-operative situation, she lives at 6, Mildmay Court, Wastgate St., Winchester, Hants, SO22 4HG

KRAFT MUSIC HALL

No preamble is necessary as we recommence listing the songs, and where possible, other details of the Kraft Music Hall series, for a fairly lengthy resume of the radio set-up in America as compared with Britain, was given when we first started out on the KMH project. It is well-established and accepted that this 10-year-long radio series was a very important segment of Bing's career. Kraft, manufacturers of cheese and other dairy products, had always paid well for a prestigious radio programme and its likely they were well aware of the bargain they had made (whatever the cost!) when they got Bing's services. Bing's radio popularity, already of fantastic proportions, was to become legendary as a result of the way he developed the KMH.

It may be appropriate, however, to have a word from Bing on the programme as he wrote in CALL ME LUCKY! :

> "Comes now a mention of my employment by the Kraft Music Hall, beginning in December, 1935. I had been broadcasting for Woodbury Soap and Chesterfields, but when I went with Kraft I was with them for a long, fat, decade.
>
> Once more, as with Jack Kapp, I fell into the hands of a man who took a personal interest in developing me. He was the writer of the show, Carroll Carroll. Its producer was Cal Cuhl.
>
> In addition to doing radio work, Carroll had written for a number of publications. He seemed to have an ear for the way I talked, and he encouraged me to incorporate as many of my own words as possible into the script. He'd send a script round to my home and I'd try to rewrite the speeches he'd written for me so as to make them sound even more like me, And I'd try to put in little jokes if I could think of any. Most of them were clumsy and pointless, but once in a while I hit something mildly amusing and Carroll wouldn't delete it if he thought it had a chance of getting a laugh. The way we worked together resulted in the next thing to ad libbing.
>
> The names of those who appeared with me on the Kraft show are a Blue Book of the loftiest talent in show business, but I had fun with them just the same. Those longhairs go for humanizing in a big way. They love it and the audience loves it, too. I never had any trouble with them about song material, the dialogue we were going to do together, or what we were going to talk about.
>
> We were careful never to make my guests seem tawdry or cheap, or trick them into buffoonery. They got a kick out of yaketing about baseball or horse racing with me, and I'd sing an aria with them (although it was difficult to find an aria I could handle) and they'd sing a scat song with me.
>
> I imagine over the ten-year span, at one time or another we had every important opera or concert name on the show, some of them many times, like Rose Bampton, Rise Stevens, Lotte Lehman, Piatigorsky, Grainger, and others. I'll never forget Chaliapin, the giant blond Russian with the

> steely blues eyes and lusty good humor. I suppose he was the greatest basso who ever lived. When he zeroed in on one of those rich, low, notes the dispaison he developed must have jiggled the needle on the Pasadena seismograph. Merely being in the same room with this man was a thrill."

It is noticeable how Bing devotes his mention of KMH to the classical artists who appeared with him. He was obviously proud - and justly so - that artists of such calibre appeared on the radio with an artist who had, so erroneously, been labelled 'crooner'. For their part, they always seemed delighted to be with Bing - and he certainly held his own with them. And in passing, it will be noted Bing was utterly fair to Carroll Carroll and the part he played in developing Bing on the radio. It hardly called for the somewhat sour comments of Carroll on the HOLLYWOOD GREATS TV show last year.

And tho' Bing didn't mention it, almost everyone in the popular field of entertainment appeared in KMH, including Hollywood colleagues. Which reminds us - Barbara Bennett was the third sister to Constance and Joan as Geoff. Nicholson of Brighton informs us. Their father, too, appeared in films.

It is also worth noting that, as with Bob Hope in films, he showed this unfailing tendency to ad-lib - a remarkable gift. But as we read in CALL ME LUCKY:

> "The Paramount (Theatre) used me as a master of ceremonies. I sang a song or two, worked in with some of the specialty acts, or did straight for visiting comics. Being an emcee turned out to be rather a merry assignment. I found I could be quite the gabby fellow. Often, I came up with 'le bon mot', or 'le mot juste', as the case required. Probably something I'd lifted, but it may have been due to the fact that in college and high school I'd been fascinated with words and their meanings....."

Bing starred in 276 one-hour KMH radio programmes from December 5, 1935 to December 31, 1942. This was the time that Japan attacked America at Pearl Habour and led to America's full entry into World War II. Thence the programmes became half-hour shows, running from January 7, 1943 to May 9, 1946, making a grand total of 385 KMH shows.

Jimmy Dorsey & his Orchestra appeared in the shows until October 7, 1937 when John Scott Trotter took over and held the musical director position until the end of the series in May 1946.

Once again one can only ponder on the 'casualness' of Bing's life style. His lazy, leizurely approach; he did the KMH throughout World War II, continued to make films, make gramophone records, tour the States bond-raising, made his momentous trip to Europe —

Some 'casualness' ! Some leizure !

Now to the songs:

5th December, 1935

PLEASE
LEARN TO CROON
JUNE IN JANUARY
FROM THE TOP OF YOUR HEAD

Sung as a medley.

RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET
ON TREASURE ISLAND

12th December, 1935

THANKS
TEMPTATION
LOVE IN BLOOM
I WISH I WERE ALADDIN

Sung as a medley.

HERE'S TO ROMANCE
AFTER YOU'VE GONE
TAKE ME BACK TO MY BOOTS AND SADDLE

19th December, 1935

I KISS YOUR HAND, MADAME
I'M YOURS
I SURRENDER, DEAR
FROM MONDAY ON

Sung as a medley.

ALONE (From Marx Bros. film 'A night at the opera'
DINAH
YOU ARE MY LUCKY STAR

26th December, 1935

THANKS A MILLION
YOU ARE MY LUCKY STAR

2nd January, 1936

EENY, MEENY, MINY, MO
I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS
TAKE ME BACK TO MY BOOTS AND SADDLE.

9th January, 1936

A LITTLE BIT INDEPENDENT
SOME OF THESE DAYS
I FOUND A DREAM
WITH ALL MY HEART

With Bob Burns -
Jimmy Dorsey & his Orch.
Announced by Don Wilson

Guests: Joe Venuti; Rupert Hughes.
The Clarke Sisters.
The Radio Rogues (imitated current radio stars, including Bing)

16th January, 1936

With Bob Burns:
Jimmy Dorsey & his Orchestra.
Guest: John Barrymore.

SOMEONE STOLE GABRIEL'S HORN
PLEASE BELIEVE ME
MY BLUE HEAVEN
ONE NIGHT IN MONTE CARLO
THE MUSIC GOES 'ROUND AND AROUND

23rd January, 1936

YOU HIT THE SPOT
A BEAUTIFUL LADY IN BLUE
MARGIE
ROLL ALONG, PRAIRIE MOON

30th January, 1936

STAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD
I'M GONNA SIT RIGHT DOWN AND WRITE MYSELF A LETTER
I NEVER KNEW.
WITH ALL MY HEART

6th February, 1936

I'M SHOOTING HIGH
I'M SORRY, DEAR.
MOON OVER MIAMI

13th February, 1936

I FEEL LIKE A FEATHER IN THE BREEZE
PLEASE BELIEVE ME
A BEAUTIFUL LADY IN BLUE
IF I SHOULD LOSE YOU

20th February, 1936

I'm gonna sit right down and write myself a letter
Dinner for one, please James
Dear old girl.
I'm building up to an awful let-down

27th February, 1936

Saddle your blues to a wild mustang
Lights out.
MOON OVER MIAMI)
I FOUND A DREAM) Sung as a medley.
HERE'S TO ROMANCE)
YOU'RE DRIVING ME CRAZY (What did I do?)

5th March, 1936

GOODY-GOODY
WITH ALL MY HEART)
PLEASE BELIEVE ME) Sung as a medley.
IF I SHOULD LOSE YOU)
DEEP NIGHT.
THE TOUCH OF YOUR LIPS.